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BYRON'S  
Childe Harold, Canto IV  
and Other Poems

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The Riverside Literature Series

# CHILDE HAROLD

## CANTO THE FOURTH

# THE PRISONER OF CHILLON AND MAZEPPA

BY

LORD BYRON

*EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LORD BYRON

ALTHOUGH Byron died at the age of thirty-six, the events of his life, as contrasted with those of most poets, are numerous and dramatic. Byron's temperament was restless and passionate, and this restlessness and passion carried him, in his brief career, into many and varied activities. We can get a short, comprehensive view of his life by considering it under the four following headings: (1) *Birth and Parentage*; (2) *Early Training and Schooling*; (3) *Career at Cambridge*; (4) *Activities of Later Life*.

George Gordon Byron was born in Holles Street, London, January 22, 1788. His father came of aristocratic lineage, though with many blots on the family *Birth and Parentage* escutcheon. His paternal grand-uncle, then lord of the estate at Newstead, which had been granted to the family by Henry VIII. killed his neighbor and kinsman, Mr. Chaworth, was committed to the Tower, and later convicted of manslaughter. The grandfather, though bearing a better reputation, led a stormy existence as an admiral in the British navy. Of him Byron wrote in the *Epistle to Augusta*, "He had no rest at sea, nor I. on shore."

The father of the poet was a notorious profligate who bore to the end of his life an unsavory reputation, and finally, after abandoning his wife and child, died abroad, leaving a very small fortune for his family.

Byron's mother, Catherine Gordon, was also of aristocratic birth, being descended from James I. of Scotland, through his daughter Annabella, married to the second Earl of Huntley. The mother was a woman of ungovernable temper, so variable and so ill-poised that Byron as a schoolboy calmly admitted to one of his playmates that she was a fool. She was not devoid of affection, but her affection was not of the strong, partial sort that arouses a child's early love. Because her son was afflicted with congenital lameness she

seemed rather angered than sympathetic. In one of her angry moods she ended her abuse by calling him "a lame brat." The sensitive nature of the boy was touched, and he said plaintively, "I was born so, mother."

When Byron was a mere infant the mother moved from London to Aberdeen, Scotland. The father was a transient visitor here until his death in 1791. Neither parent seems to have exerted the influence which the little boy's nurse, Mary Gray, exerted; and to her biographers attribute the poet's knowledge of the Bible — particularly the Psalms — and the early Calvinistic bent given to his religious nature.

Here in Scotland his formal schooling began. In 1792 — he was then but four years old — he was sent to a rudimentary school taught by a Mr. Boyers. He had several different tutors who prepared him for the Aberdeen Grammar School, where, to use his own phrase, he "threaded all the classes to the fourth."

At this time (1798) Byron inherited the estate of Newstead Abbey, and soon the mother and son returned to England. Newstead, however, was in a state of decay and burdened with debt. Mrs. Byron could not afford to live there, and accordingly took up her residence at Nottingham where they lived for twelve months, Byron being under the tutelage of a Mr. Rogers, who seems to have aroused the boy's affection. From here he went to Dr. Glennie's school at Dulwich, leaving that for Harrow, which he entered in 1801.

Of the boy Byron Dr. Joseph Drury, the head-master, later wrote: "Mr. Hanson, Lord Byron's solicitor, consigned him to my care at the age of thirteen and a half, with remarks that his education had been neglected; that he was ill-prepared for a public school; but that he thought there was *cleverness* about him. After his departure I took my young disciple into my study, and endeavored to bring him forward by inquiries as to his former amusements, employments, and associates, but with little or no effect, and I soon found that a wild mountain colt had been submitted to my management. But there was mind in his

eye. In the first place, it was necessary to attach him to an elder boy: the information he received gave him no pleasure when he heard of the advances of some much younger than himself. This I discovered, and assured him that he should not be placed till by diligence he might rank with those of his own age. His manner and temper soon convinced me that he might be led by a silken string to a point, rather than a cable: on that principle I acted."

Byron to the end of his life cherished a high regard for Dr. Drury, but the school—except the last year and a half—he disliked. He revolted against its discipline; he was a careless student of Latin, Greek, and mathematics; and disliked continuous study of any kind; but all the while he was an omnivorous reader. His special interest at this time lay in declamation rather than in poetry. His prowess in athletics, especially in boxing, rowing, and swimming, won for him a leader's part among the boys of the school. He formed many strong attachments, and won a reputation for loyalty in his friendships.

Byron spent the years from 1805 to 1808 in a desultory attendance at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he received his honorary nobleman's M. A. degree in March <sup>Career at Cambridge</sup> of his last year in residence. Just how he was able to secure a degree is a mystery, for he was always a poor student, idled away much of his time in London, squandered his money lavishly, and spent much of his time in athletic sports—in cricket, boxing, riding, shooting, and swimming.

For the University he avowed a candid dislike, as did Milton and Dryden and Gray. Yet careless as the days he spent here, it would be folly to suppose that the academic atmosphere was not a powerful influence in developing his poetical genius. Here he met many young men who became his ardent friends, many of whom helped to kindle his intellectual fires. His intimate companions were Edward Noel Long, Charles Skinner Mathews, the Rev. F. Hodgson, and his lifelong friend, John Cam Hobhouse. He was especially intimate with a youth named Eddlestone, of inferior social rank, but one whom he said he "loved

more than any human being." Association with all these and with his tutor, and with the university lecturers, had an influence hard to estimate, but nevertheless real.

In 1806, when Byron was eighteen years old, he collected and published for private distribution his juvenile <sup>Activities of</sup> poems, which were in no sense remarkable, and <sup>Later Life</sup> did not foreshadow his future genius. A year later he issued another volume entitled *Hours of Idleness*.

As we view it in retrospect, the publication of *Hours in Idleness* is important, not so much for its inherent merit as for its influence in making literary history. It was perhaps largely by chance that the volume happened to fall under the eye and under the odium of Lord Brougham, who thereupon wrote a scathing criticism of the work for the *Edinburgh Review*. The severity of this criticism aroused the Berserker nature of Lord Byron, who retaliated with a long poem, published a year later (1809), *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. The reply revealed the rapid movement and the satiric gleam which distinguished much of Byron's later work. It immediately gave him a reputation for poetic power, though full of bitterness and abuse.

Just a few weeks before the publication of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* Byron had come of age and had taken his seat in the House of Lords. Shortly after the publication of the poem he started with his friend Hobhouse on his first sojourn on the Continent. In his journey of two years he visited Portugal, Spain, Sardinia, Greece, Turkey, and other foreign countries, at odd hours writing in verse an idealized account of his travels.

On his return to England in 1811 he published the first two cantos of this account under the title of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. This poem met with extraordinary popularity; as Byron himself expressed it, "I awoke one morning and found myself famous."

For a time after his return to England Byron was deeply interested in politics, and made several speeches in the House of Lords on the Liberal side. But the natural

genius of the man was literary and social. He became the popular hero of the hour. He became the intimate companion of such celebrities as Sheridan, Rogers, Campbell, Monk Lewis, and Madame de Staël. His social duties did not apparently interfere with his writing, and before 1816 he had written and published *The Waltz*, *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, *Hebrew Melodies*, *Siege of Corinth*, and *Parisina*.

On January 2, 1815, Byron, after a series of love-affairs, was married to Miss Anne Isabella Milbanke, only daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke. In December of that year their daughter, Augusta Ada, was born. The temperaments of the husband and wife were ill-suited, and after an unhappy year of married life, there was a formal separation. Their domestic trouble was widely heralded, and Byron, the erstwhile lion of London society, was degraded and held up to public scorn. Lady Byron thought him insane. Matters grew so disturbing to the poet that in April of 1816 Byron left England for good. Concerning this departure he later wrote: "I felt that, if what was whispered and muttered and murmured was true, I was unfit for England; if false, England was unfit for me. I withdrew; but this was not enough. In other countries—in Switzerland, in the shadow of the Alps, and by the blue depth of the lakes—I was pursued and breathed upon by the same blight. I crossed the mountains, but it was the same; so I went a little farther, and settled myself by the waves of the Adriatic, like the stag at bay, who betakes himself to the water."

This second tour on the Continent provided the material for the third and fourth cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. Among the places visited were Ostend, Ghent, Antwerp, Mechlin, Waterloo, Geneva, Coblenz, Lake Leman, Vevay (where the castle of Chillon is situated), Milan, Venice, and Rome. The poem was completed in the latter part of 1817.

In the meantime *The Prisoner of Chillon* had been completed and *Manfred* had been begun. These were followed by *Beppo* (1818), *Prophecy of Dante* (1819), *Ma-*

*rino Faliero* (1820), *The Two Foscari* (1821), *Sardanapalus* (1821), *Cain* (1821), *Vision of Judgment* (1821), *Werner* (1822), *The Deformed Transformed* (1822), *Don Juan*, unfinished, (1823), and many minor poems.

But Byron's interests were not wholly literary. In 1820 he became an active sympathizer in the Carbonari movement in Italy — a movement designed to free Italy from Austrian rule. The leaders of the Carbonari were discovered and banished. Byron, being an Englishman of rank, was exempted from punishment, though the Austrian government was cognizant of his connection with the conspiracy.

His last political interest was the independence of Greece in her struggle against Turkey. For this he gave freely of his money, equipping a ship at his own expense and volunteering his services. In this campaign he manifested such courage and sagacity that he quickly won the confidence of the Grecian leaders. Some historians think that, had he lived to see the success of the Greek cause, he would have been made king. But all plans were cut short by fever contracted at Mesolonghi. Here, after an illness of ten days, he died, April 19, 1824, greatly mourned by the Greeks. Burial at Westminster Abbey being denied him, his remains were laid by the side of those of his ancestors in the village church at Hucknall, the conservative gentry abstemiously denying their presence, the common people attending in throngs.

In all that period from 1816 to his death in 1824 Byron had lived on the Continent the life of a reckless adventurer and nomad. Venice, Ravenna, Pisa, Genoa, Mesolonghi — all these had been successive scenes in the fifth act of his life's tragedy. Into it had come other important characters — the Shelleys, the Godwins, Lady Caroline Lamb, Claire Clairmont, the Countess Guiccioli, the members of the Carbonari, and the Greek revolters. Moods of passion and patriotism and generosity and satire and courage and irresolution mingled in strange confusion, until finally the end came in his death by fever in that last sacrificial deed of his in behalf of Grecian liberty.

## CHILDE HAROLD.

### CANTO THE FOURTH.

#### I.

I STOOD in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,  
A palace and a prison on each hand ;  
I saw from out the wave her structures rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :  
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles  
O'er the far times, when many a subject land  
Look'd to the wingèd Lion's marble piles,  
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred  
isles !

#### II.

10 She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,  
Rising with her tiara of proud towers  
At airy distance, with majestic motion,  
A ruler of the waters and their powers.  
And such she was ; — her daughters had their  
dowers  
15 From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East  
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers :  
In purple was she robed, and of her feast  
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity in-  
creased.

#### III.

20 In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,  
And silent rows the songless gondolier ;  
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
And music meets not always now the ear ;

Those days are gone, but Beauty still is here ;  
 States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth not die,  
 25 Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,  
     The pleasant place of all festivity,  
     The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

## IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond  
 Her name in story, and her long array  
 30 Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond  
     Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway :  
     Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
     With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor  
     And Pierre can not be swept or worn away,  
 35 The keystones of the arch ! — though all were o'er,  
     For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

## V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;  
 Essentially immortal, they create  
     And multiply in us a brighter ray  
 40 And more beloved existence. That which Fate  
     Prohibits to dull life in this our state  
     Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,  
     First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;  
     Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,  
 45 And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

## VI.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,  
 The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy ;  
     And this worn feeling peoples many a page,  
     And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye.  
 50 Yet there are things whose strong reality

Outshines our fairy-land ; in shape and hues  
 More beautiful than our fantastic sky,  
 And the strange constellations which the Muse  
 O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse :

## VII.

55 I saw or dream'd of such, — but let them go, —  
 They came like truth, and disappear'd like  
 dreams ;  
 And whatsoe'er they were — are now but so.  
 I could replace them if I would ; still teems  
 My mind with many a form which aptly seems  
 60 Such as I sought for, and at moments found :  
 Let these too go, for waking Reason deems  
 Such over-weening phantasies unsound,  
 And other voices speak and other sights surround.

## VIII.

I 've taught me other tongues, and in strange eyes  
 65 Have made me not a stranger — to the mind  
 Which is itself, no changes bring surprise ;  
 Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find  
 A country with — ay, or without mankind ;  
 Yet was I born where men are proud to be,  
 70 Not without cause ; and should I leave behind  
 The inviolate island of the sage and free,  
 And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

## IX.

Perhaps I loved it well ; and should I lay  
 My ashes in a soil which is not mine,  
 75 My spirit shall resume it — if we may  
 Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine  
 My hopes of being remember'd in my line

With my land's language : if too fond and far  
 These aspirations in their scope incline, —  
 80 If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,  
 Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

## X.

My name from out the temple where the dead  
 Are honour'd by the nations — let it be,  
 And light the laurels on a loftier head !  
 85 And be the Spartan's epitaph on me,  
 ' Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.'  
 Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need ;  
 The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree  
 I planted, — they have torn me — and I bleed :  
 90 I should have known what fruit would spring from  
 such a seed.

## XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord ;  
 And annual marriage now no more renew'd,  
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,  
 Neglected garment of her widowhood !  
 85 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood  
 Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,  
 Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,  
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour  
 When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd  
 dower.

## XII.

100 The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns —  
 An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt ;  
 Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains  
 Clank over sceptred cities ; nations melt  
 From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt

105 The sunshine for a while, and downward go  
 Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's  
 belt ; —  
 Oh, for one hour of blind old Dandolo,  
 Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe !

## XIII.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,  
 110 Their gilded collars glittering in the sun ;  
 But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?  
 Are they not *bridled* ? — Venice lost and won,  
 Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,  
 Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose !  
 115 Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,  
 Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,  
 From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

## XIV.

In youth she was all glory, a new Tyre,  
 Her very by-word sprung from victory,  
 120 The 'Planter of the Lion,' which through fire  
 And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea ;  
 Though making many slaves, herself still free,  
 And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite ; —  
 Witness Troy's rival, Candia ! Vouch it, ye  
 125 Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight !  
 For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

## XV.

Statues of glass — all shiver'd — the long file  
 Of her dead Doges are declined to dust ;  
 But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous  
 pile  
 130 Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust ;

Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,  
 Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,  
 Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must  
 Too oft remind her who and what entralls,  
 135 Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely  
 walls.

## XVI.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,  
 And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,  
 Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,  
 Her voice their only ransom from afar:  
 140 See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car  
 Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins  
 Fall from his hands — his idle scimitar  
 Starts from its belt — he rends his captive's chains,  
 And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his  
 strains.

## XVII.

145 Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,  
 Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,  
 Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,  
 Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot  
 Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot  
 150 Is shameful to the nations, — most of all,  
 Albion, to thee: the Ocean queen should not  
 Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall  
 Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

## XVIII.

I loved her from my boyhood; she to me  
 155 Was as a fairy city of the heart,  
 Rising like water-columns from the sea,

Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart :  
 And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,  
 Had stamp'd her image in me ; and even so,  
 160 Although I found her thus, we did not part,  
 Perchance even dearer in her day of woe  
 Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

## XIX.

I can repeople with the past — and of  
 The present there is still for eye and thought,  
 165 And meditation chasten'd down, enough,  
 And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought ;  
 And of the happiest moments which were wrought  
 Within the web of my existence, some  
 From thee, fair Venice, have their colours caught :  
 170 There are some feelings Time cannot benumb,  
 Nor torture shake, or mine would now be cold and  
 dumb.

## XX.

But from their nature will the tannen grow  
 Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,  
 Rooted in barrenness, where nought below  
 175 Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks  
 Of eddying storms ; yet springs the trunk, and  
 mocks  
 The howling tempest, till its height and frame  
 Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks  
 Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,  
 180 And grew a giant tree ; — the mind may grow the  
 same.

## XXI.

Existence may be borne, and the deep root  
 Of life and sufferance make its firm abode

In bare and desolated bosoms : mute  
 The camel labours with the heaviest load,  
 185 And the wolf dies in silence, — not bestow'd  
 In vain should such example be ; if they,  
 Things of ignoble or of savage mood,  
 Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay  
 May temper it to bear, — it is but for a day.

## XXII.

190 All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd  
 Even by the sufferer ; and, in each event,  
 Ends : — Some, with hope replenish'd and re-  
 buoy'd,  
 Return to whence they came — with like intent,  
 And weave their web again ; some, bow'd and  
 bent,  
 195 Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,  
 And perish with the reed on which they leant ;  
 Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,  
 According as their souls were form'd to sink or  
 climb.

## XXIII.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued  
 200 There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,  
 Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued ;  
 And slight withal may be the things which bring  
 Back on the heart the weight which it would  
 fling  
 Aside for ever : it may be a sound, —  
 205 A tone of music, summer's eve, or spring,  
 A flower, the wind, the ocean, — which shall  
 wound,  
 Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly  
 bound ;

## XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace  
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,  
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface  
210 The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,  
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,  
When least we deem of such, calls up to view  
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,  
215 The cold — the changed — perchance the dead —  
anew,  
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost — too many! — yet  
how few!

## XXV.

But my soul wanders ; I demand it back  
To meditate amongst decay, and stand  
A ruin amidst ruins ; there to track  
220 Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land  
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,  
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be  
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,  
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,  
225 The beautiful, the brave — the lords of earth and  
sea,

## XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome !  
And even since, and now, fair Italy,  
Thou art the garden of the world, the home  
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree ;  
230 Even in thy desert, what is like to thee ?  
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste  
More rich than other climes' fertility ;

Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced  
 With an immaculate charm which cannot be de-  
 faced.

## XXVII.

235 The moon is up, and yet it is not night—  
 Sunset divides the sky with her, a sea  
 Of glory streams along the Alpine height  
 Of blue Friuli's mountains ; Heaven is free  
 From clouds, but of all colours seems to be  
 240 Melted to one vast Iris of the West,  
 Where the Day joins the past Eternity ;  
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest  
 Floats through the azure air, an island of the blest !

## XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns  
 245 With her o'er half the lovely heaven ; but still  
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains  
 Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,  
 As Day and Night contending were, until  
 Nature reclaim'd her order : gently flows  
 250 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil  
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,  
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within  
 it glows,

## XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which from afar  
 Comes down upon the waters ; all its hues,  
 255 From the rich sunset to the rising star,  
 Their magical variety diffuse.  
 And now they change ; a paler shadow strews  
 Its mantle o'er the mountains ; parting day  
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues

260 With a new colour as it gasps away,  
 The last still loveliest, till — 't is gone — and all is  
 gray.

## XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua ; — rear'd in air,  
 Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose  
 The bones of Laura's lover: here repair  
 265 Many familiar with his well-sung woes,  
 The pilgrims of his genius. He arose  
 To raise a language, and his land reclaim  
 From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes ;  
 Watering the tree which bears his lady's name  
 270 With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

## XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua where he died,  
 The mountain-village where his latter days  
 Went down the vale of years ; and 't is their  
 pride —  
 An honest pride, and let it be their praise —  
 275 To offer to the passing stranger's gaze  
 His mansion and his sepulchre ; both plain  
 And venerably simple, such as raise  
 A feeling more accordant with his strain  
 Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

## XXXII.

280 And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt  
 Is one of that complexion which seems made  
 For those who their mortality have felt,  
 And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd  
 In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,  
 285 Which shows a distant prospect far away

Of busy cities, now in vain display'd  
 For they can lure no further ; and the ray  
 Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

## XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,  
 290 And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,  
 Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours  
 With a calm languor, which, though to the eye  
 Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.  
 If from society we learn to live,  
 295 'T is solitude should teach us how to die ;  
 It hath no flatterers ; vanity can give  
 No hollow aid ; alone — man with his God must  
 strive :

## XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair  
 The strength of better thoughts, and seek their  
 prey  
 300 In melancholy bosoms, such as were  
 Of moody texture from their earliest day  
 And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,  
 Deeming themselves predestined to a doom  
 Which is not of the pangs that pass away ;  
 305 Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,  
 The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

## XXXV.

Ferrara, in thy wide and grass-grown streets  
 Whose symmetry was not for solitude,  
 There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats  
 310 Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood  
 Of Este, which for many an age made good

Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore  
 Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood  
 Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore  
 315 The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn  
 before.

## XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame :  
 Hark to his strain and then survey his cell !  
 And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,  
 And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell.  
 320 The miserable despot could not quell  
 The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend  
 With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell  
 Where he had plunged it. Glory without end  
 Scatter'd the clouds away, and on that name attend

## XXXVII.

325 The tears and praises of all time; while thine  
 Would rot in its oblivion — in the sink  
 Of worthless dust which from thy boasted line  
 Is shaken into nothing — but the link  
 Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think  
 330 Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn.  
 Alfonso ! how thy ducal pageants shrink  
 From thee ! if in another station born,  
 Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou madest to  
 mourn : —

## XXXVIII.

335 *Thou !* form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,  
 Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou  
 Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty ;  
*He !* with a glory round his furrow'd brow,  
 Which emanated then, and dazzles now,

340 In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,  
 And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow  
 No strain which shamed his country's creaking  
 lyre,  
 That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire !

## XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injured shade ! 't was his  
 In life and death to be the mark where Wrong  
 345 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows, but to miss.  
 Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song !  
 Each year brings forth its millions ; but how long  
 The tide of generations shall roll on,  
 And not the whole combined and countless throng  
 350 Compose a mind like thine ? Though all in one  
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form  
 a sun.

## XL.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,  
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,  
 The Bards of Hell and Chivalry : first rose  
 355 The Tuscan father's comedy divine ;  
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine  
 The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth  
 A new creation with his magic line,  
 And, like the Ariosto of the North,  
 360 Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly  
 worth.

## XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust  
 The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves ;  
 Nor was the ominous element unjust,  
 For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves

365 Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,  
 And the false semblance but disgraced his brow ;  
 Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,  
 Know, that the lightning sanctifies below  
 Whate'er it strikes ; — yon head is doubly sacred  
 now.

## XLII.

370 Italia ! oh, Italia ! thou who hast  
 The fatal gift of beauty, which became  
 A funeral dower of present woes and past,  
 On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,  
 And annals graved in characters of flame.  
 375 Oh, God ! that thou wert in thy nakedness  
 Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim  
 Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press  
 To shed thy blood and drink the tears of thy distress ;

## XLIII.

380 Then mightst thou more appal ; or, less desired,  
 Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored  
 For thy destructive charms ; then, still untired,  
 Would not be seen the arm'd torrents pour'd  
 Down the deep Alps ; nor would the hostile horde  
 Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po  
 385 Quaff blood and water ; nor the stranger's sword  
 Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,  
 Victor or vanquished, thou the slave of friend or foe.

## XLIV.

390 Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,  
 The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,  
 The friend of Tully. As my bark did skim  
 The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,  
 Came Megara before me, and behind

Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,  
 And Corinth on the left ; I lay reclined  
 395 Along the prow, and saw all these unite  
 In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight ; —

## XLV.

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but uprear'd  
 Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,  
 Which only make more mourn'd and more en-  
 dear'd  
 400 The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light  
 And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.  
 The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,  
 These sepulchres of cities which excite  
 Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page  
 405 The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

## XLVI.

That page is now before me, and on mine  
*His* country's ruin added to the mass  
 Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,  
 And I in desolation. All that *was*  
 410 Of then destruction *is* ; and now, alas !  
 Rome — Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,  
 In the same dust and blackness, and we pass  
 The skeleton of her Titanic form,  
 Wrecks of another world whose ashes still are warm.

## XLVII.

415 Yet, Italy ! through every other land  
 Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to  
 side ;  
 Mother of Arts, as once of arms ; thy hand  
 Was then our guardian, and is still our guide ;

420 Parent of our Religion, whom the wide  
 Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven !  
 Europe, repentant of her parricide,  
 Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,  
 Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

## XLVIII.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,  
 425 Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps  
 A softer feeling for her fairy halls.  
 Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps  
 Her corn and wine and oil, and Plenty leaps  
 To laughing life with her redundant horn.  
 430 Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps  
 Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,  
 And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

## XLIX.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills  
 The air around with beauty. We inhale  
 435 The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils  
 Part of its immortality ; the veil  
 Of heaven is half undrawn ; within the pale  
 We stand, and in that form and face behold  
 What mind can make when Nature's self would  
 fail ;  
 440 And to the fond idolaters of old  
 Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould.

## L.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,  
 Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart  
 Reels with its fulness ; there — for ever there —  
 445 Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,

We stand as captives and would not depart.  
 Away! — there need no words nor terms precise,  
 The paltry jargon of the marble mart  
 Where Pedantry gulls Folly — we have eyes:  
 450 Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

## LI.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?  
 Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,  
 In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies  
 Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of War?  
 455 And gazing in thy face as toward a star,  
 Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,  
 Feeding on thy sweet cheek; while thy lips are  
 With lava kisses melting while they burn,  
 Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from  
 an urn!

## LII.

460 Glowing and circumfused in speechless love,  
 Their full divinity inadequate  
 That feeling to express or to improve,  
 The gods become as mortals, and man's fate  
 Has moments like their brightest; but the weight  
 465 Of earth recoils upon us; — let it go!  
 We can recall such visions, and create,  
 From what has been or might be, things which grow  
 Into thy statue's form and look like gods below.

## LIII.

I leave to learnèd fingers and wise hands,  
 470 The artist and his ape, to teach and tell  
 How well his connoisseurship understands  
 The graceful bend and the voluptuous swell:

Let these describe the undescribable ;  
 I would not their vile breath should crisp the  
 stream

475 Wherein that image shall for ever dwell,  
 The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream  
 That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

## LIV.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie  
 Ashes which make it holier, dust which is  
 480 Even in itself an immortality,  
 Though there were nothing save the past, and this,  
 The particle of those sublimities  
 Which have relapsed to chaos : here repose  
 Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,  
 485 The starry Galileo, with his woes ;  
 Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

## LV.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,  
 Might furnish forth creation. Italy !  
 Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand  
 rents

490 Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,  
 And hath denied, to every other sky  
 Spirits which soar from ruin : — thy decay  
 Is still impregnate with divinity,  
 Which gilds it with revivifying ray ;  
 495 Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

## LVI.

But where repose the all Etruscan three —  
 Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,  
 The Bard of Prose, creative spirit, he

500 Of the Hundred Tales of love — where did they lay  
 Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay  
 In death as life ? Are they resolved to dust,  
 And have their country's marbles nought to say ?  
 Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust ?  
 Did they not to her breast their filial earth intrust ?

## LVII.

505 Ungrateful Florence ! Dante sleeps afar,  
 Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore ;  
 Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,  
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore  
 Their children's children would in vain adore  
 510 With the remorse of ages ; and the crown  
 Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,  
 Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,  
 His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled — not  
 thine own.

## LVIII.

515 Boccaceio to his parent earth bequeath'd  
 His dust ; and lies it not her Great among,  
 With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed  
 O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue ?  
 That music in itself, whose sounds are song,  
 The poetry of speech ? No ; — even his tomb  
 520 Uptorn must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,  
 No more amidst the meaner dead find room,  
 Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom* !

## LIX.

525 And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust, —  
 Yet for this want more noted, as of yore  
 The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,

Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more.  
 Happier Ravenna ! on thy hoary shore,  
 Fortress of falling empire, honour'd sleeps  
 The immortal exile ; Arqua, too, her store  
 530 Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,  
 While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead, and  
 weeps.

## LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones,  
 Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues  
 Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones  
 535 Of merchant-dukes ? The momentary dews  
 Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse  
 Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,  
 Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,  
 Are gently prest with far more reverent tread  
 540 Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely  
 head.

## LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes  
 In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,  
 Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies ;  
 There be more marvels yet — but not for mine ;  
 545 For I have been accustom'd to entwine  
 My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,  
 Than Art in galleries : though a work divine  
 Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields  
 Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

## LXII.

550 Is of another temper, and I roam  
 By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles  
 Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home ;

For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles  
 Come back before me, as his skill beguiles  
 555 The host between the mountains and the shore,  
 Where Courage falls in her despairing files,  
 And torrents, swell'n to rivers with their gore,  
 Reek through the sultry plain with legions shattered  
 o'er,

## LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds ;  
 560 And such the storm of battle on this day,  
 And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds  
 To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,  
 An earthquake reel'd unheededly away !  
 None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,  
 565 And yawning forth a grave for those who lay  
 Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet ;  
 Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations  
 meet !

## LXIV.

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark  
 Which bore them to Eternity ; they saw  
 570 The Ocean round, but had no time to mark  
 The motions of their vessel ; Nature's law,  
 In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe  
 Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the  
 birds  
 Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw  
 575 From their down-toppling nests ; and bellowing  
 herds  
 Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath  
 no words.

## LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now ;  
 Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain

Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough ;  
 580 Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain  
 Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en —  
 A little rill of scanty stream and bed —  
 A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;  
 And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead  
 585 Made the earth wet and turn'd the unwilling  
 waters red.

## LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus, in thy sweetest wave  
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er  
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave  
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear  
 590 Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer  
 Grazes, — the purest god of gentle waters,  
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear !  
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaugthers —  
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters !

## LXVII.

605 And on thy happy shore a Temple still,  
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,  
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,  
 Its memory of thee ; beneath it sweeps  
 Thy current's calmness ; oft from out it leaps  
 600 The finny darter with the glittering scales,  
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps ;  
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails  
 Down where the shallower wave still tells its bub-  
 bling tales.

## LXVIII.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place !  
 610 If through the air a zephyr more serene  
 Win to the brow, 't is his ; and if ye trace

Along his margin a more eloquent green,  
 If on the heart the freshness of the scene  
 Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust  
 610 Of weary life a moment lave it clean  
 With Nature's baptism,—'t is to him ye must  
 Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

## LXIX.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height  
 Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;  
 615 The fall of waters! rapid as the light  
 The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;  
 The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,  
 And boil in endless torture; while the sweat  
 Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
 620 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet  
 That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

## LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again  
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,  
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,  
 625 Is an eternal April to the ground,  
 Making it all one emerald:—how profound  
 The gulf! and how the giant element  
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
 Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and  
 rent  
 630 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful  
 vent

## LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows  
 More like the fountain of an infant sea  
 Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes

635 Of a new world, than only thus to be  
 Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
 With many windings, through the vale:—Look  
 back!  
 Lo, where it comes like an eternity,  
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
 Charming the eye with dread—a matchless cataract,

## LXXII.

640 Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,  
 From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,  
 An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,  
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dyes while all around is torn  
 645 By the distracted waters, bears serene  
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn;  
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,  
 Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

## LXXIII.

650 Once more upon the woody Apennine,  
 The infant Alps, which — had I not before  
 Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine  
 Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar  
 The thundering lauwine— might be worshipp'd  
 more;  
 But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear  
 655 Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar  
 Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,  
 And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

## LXXIV.

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;  
 And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly

660 Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for fame,  
 For still they soar'd unutterably high :  
 I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye ;  
 Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made  
 These hills seem things of lesser dignity,  
 665 All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd  
 Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

## LXXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain  
 Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,  
 And on the curl hangs pausing. Not in vain  
 670 May he, who will, his recollections rake,  
 And quote in classic raptures, and awake  
 The hills with Latin echoes ; I abhor'd  
 Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,  
 The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word  
 675 In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

## LXXXVI.

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd  
 My sickening memory ; and, though Time hath  
 taught  
 My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,  
 Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought  
 680 By the impatience of my early thought,  
 That, with the freshness wearing out before  
 My mind could relish what it might have sought,  
 If free to choose, I cannot now restore  
 Its health ; but what it then detested, still abhor.

## LXXXVII.

685 Then farewell, Horace ; whom I hated so,  
 Not for thy faults, but mine ; it is a curse

To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,  
 To comprehend, but never love thy verse,  
 Although no deeper Moralist rehearse  
 690 Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,  
 Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,  
 Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart ;  
 Yet fare thee well — upon Soracte's ridge we part.

## LXXVIII.

Oh Rome, my country ! city of the soul !  
 695 The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,  
 Lone mother of dead empires, and control  
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.  
 What are our woes and sufferance ? Come and see  
 The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way  
 700 O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye !  
 Whose agonies are evils of a day —  
 A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

## LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,  
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;  
 705 An empty urn within her wither'd hands,  
 Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago :  
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now ;  
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless  
 Of their heroic dwellers ; — dost thou flow,  
 710 Old Tiber, through a marble wilderness ?  
 Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress !

## LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and  
 Fire,  
 Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride ;

She saw her glories star by star expire,  
 715 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride  
 Where the car climb'd the capitol ; far and wide  
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site :—  
 Chaos of ruins ! who shall trace the void,  
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
 720 And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is doubly night ?

## LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,  
 Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and  
 wrap  
 All round us ; we but feel our way to err :  
 The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,  
 725 And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap ;  
 But Rome is as the desert where we steer  
 Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap  
 Our hands, and cry 'Eureka !' it is clear —  
 When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

## LXXXII.

730 Alas, the lofty city ! and alas,  
 The trebly hundred triumphs ! and the day  
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass  
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away !  
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,  
 735 And Livy's pictured page ! — but these shall be  
 Her resurrection ; all beside — decay.  
 Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see  
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was  
 free !

## LXXXIII.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,  
 740 Triumphant Sylla ! thou, who didst subdue

Thy country's foes ere thou wouldest pause to feel  
 The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due  
 Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew  
 O'er prostrate Asia ; — thou, who with thy frown  
 745      Annihilated senates — Roman, too,  
 With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down  
 With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown,

## LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath, — couldst thou divine  
 To what would one day dwindle that which made  
 750      Thee more than mortal ? and that so supine  
 By aught than Romans Rome should thus be  
 laid ?  
 She who was named Eternal ; and array'd  
 Her warriors but to conquer — she who veil'd  
 Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,  
 755      Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,  
 Her rushing wings — Oh, she who was Almighty  
 hail'd !

## LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors ; but our own  
 The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell ; he  
 Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne  
 760      Down to a block — immortal rebel ! See  
 What crimes it costs to be a moment free  
 And famous through all ages ! but beneath  
 His fate the moral lurks of destiny ;  
 His day of double victory and death  
 765      Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his  
 breath.

## LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former course  
 Had all but crown'd him, on the self-same day

Deposed him gently from his throne of force,  
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.  
770 And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and  
sway.  
And all we deem delightful and consume  
Our souls to compass through each arduous  
way,  
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb ?  
Were they but so in man's, how different were his  
doom !

## LXXXVII.

775 And thou, dread statue, yet existent in  
The austerest form of naked majesty !  
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,  
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,  
Folding his robe in dying dignity,  
780 An offering to thine altar from the queen  
Of gods and men, great Nemesis ! did he die,  
And thou, too, perish, Pompey ? have ye been  
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene ?

## LXXXVIII.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome !  
785 She-wolf, whose brazen-imaged dugs impart  
The milk of conquest yet within the dome  
Where, as a monument of antique art,  
Thou standest ; mother of the mighty heart,  
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild  
teat,  
790 Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart,  
And thy limbs black with lightning — dost thou  
yet  
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge  
forget ?

## LXXXIX.

Thou dost ; but all thy foster-babes are dead —  
 The men of iron ; and the world hath rear'd  
 795 Cities from out their sepulchres. Men bled  
 In imitation of the things they fear'd  
 And fought and conquer'd and the same course  
 steer'd,  
 At apish distance ; but as yet none have,  
 Nor could the same supremacy have near'd,  
 800 Save one vain man, who is not in the grave  
 But vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a  
 slave —

## XC.

The fool of false dominion — and a kind  
 Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old  
 With steps unequal ; for the Roman's mind  
 805 Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould,  
 With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,  
 And an immortal instinct which redeem'd  
 The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,  
 Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd  
 810 At Cleopatra's feet, — and now himself he beam'd,

## XCI.

And came — and saw — and conquer'd ! But the  
 man  
 Who would have tamed his eagles down to  
 flee,  
 Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,  
 Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,  
 815 With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be  
 A listener to itself, was strangely framed ;  
 With but one weakest weakness — vanity,

Coquettish in ambition — still he aim'd —  
 At what? can he avouch — or answer what he  
 claim'd? —

## XCII.

820 And would be all or nothing — nor could wait  
 For the sure grave to level him; few years  
 Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,  
 On whom we tread. For *this* the conqueror rears  
 The arch of triumph! and for this the tears  
 825 And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd,  
 An universal deluge, which appears  
 Without an ark for wretched man's abode,  
 And ebbs but to reflow! — Renew thy rainbow, God!

## XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap?  
 830 Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,  
 Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,  
 And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;  
 Opinion an omnipotence, — whose veil  
 Mantles the earth with darkness, until right  
 835 And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale  
 Lest their own judgments should become too  
 bright,  
 And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have  
 too much light.

## XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,  
 Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,  
 840 Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,  
 Bequeathing their hereditary rage  
 To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage  
 War for their chains, and rather than be free,

Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage  
 845 Within the same arena where they see  
 Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

## XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds — they rest between  
 Man and his Maker — but of things allow'd,  
 Averr'd, and known — and daily, hourly seen —  
 850 The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd  
 And the intent of tyranny avow'd,  
 The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown  
 The apes of him who humbled once the proud  
 And shook them from their slumbers on the  
 throne ;  
 855 Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

## XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,  
 And Freedom find no champion and no child  
 Such as Columbia saw arise when she  
 Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled ?  
 860 Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,  
 Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar  
 Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled  
 On infant Washington ? Has Earth no more  
 Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such  
 shore ?

## XCVII.

865 But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,  
 And fatal have her Saturnalia been  
 To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime ;  
 Because the deadly days which we have seen,  
 And vile Ambition, that built up between  
 870 Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,

And the base pageant last upon the scene,  
 Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall  
 Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—  
 his second fall.

## XCVIII.

Yet, Freedom, yet thy banner, torn but flying,  
 Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind ;  
 Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,  
 The loudest still the tempest leaves behind :  
 Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,  
 Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,  
 But the sap lasts, — and still the seed we find  
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North ;  
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

## XCIX.

There is a stern round tower of other days,  
 Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,  
 Such as an army's baffled strength delays,  
 Standing with half its battlements alone,  
 And with two thousand years of ivy grown,  
 The garland of eternity, where wave  
 The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown ; —  
 What was this tower of strength ? within its cave  
 What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid ? A woman's  
 grave.

## C.

But who was she, the lady of the dead,  
 Tomb'd in a palace ? Was she chaste and fair ?  
 Worthy a king's — or more — a Roman's bed ?  
 What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear ?  
 What daughter of her beauties was the heir ?

How lived, how loved, how died she ? Was she not  
So honour'd — and conspicuously there,  
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,  
900 Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot ?

## C.I.

Was she as those who love their lords, or they  
Who love the lords of others ? — such have been  
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.  
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,  
905 Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,  
Profuse of joy — or 'gainst it did she war,  
Inveterate in virtue ? Did she lean  
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar  
Love from amongst her griefs ? — for such the  
affections are.

## C.II.

910 Perchance she died in youth : it may be, bow'd  
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb  
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud  
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom  
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom  
915 Heaven gives its favourites — early death ; yet  
shed  
A sunset charm around her, and illume  
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,  
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

## C.III.

920 Perchance she died in age — surviving all,  
Charms, kindred, children — with the silver gray  
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,  
It may be, still a something of the day  
When they were braided, and her proud array

925 And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed  
 By Rome.—But whither would Conjecture stray?  
 Thus much alone we know—Metella died,  
 The wealthiest Roman's wife. Behold his love or  
 pride !

## CIV.

I know not why, but standing thus by thee,  
 It seems as if I had thine inmate known,  
 930 Thou tomb ! and other days come back on me  
 With recollected music, though the tone  
 Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan  
 Of dying thunder on the distant wind ;  
 Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone  
 935 Till I had bodied forth the heated mind  
 Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves  
 behind ;

## CV.

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,  
 Built me a little bark of hope, once more  
 To battle with the ocean and the shocks  
 940 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar  
 Which rushes on the solitary shore  
 Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear.  
 But could I gather from the wave-worn store  
 Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer ?  
 945 There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is  
 here.

## CVI.

Then let the winds howl on ! their harmony  
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night  
 The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,  
 As I now hear them, in the fading light

950 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,  
 Answering each other on the Palatine,  
 With their large eyes all glistening gray and  
     bright,  
 And sailing pinions. Upon such a shrine  
 What are our petty griefs? — let me not number  
     mine.

## CVII.

955 Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown  
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd  
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column  
     strown  
 In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos  
     steep'd  
 In subterranean damps where the owl peep'd,  
 960 Deeming it midnight: — Temples, baths, or halls?  
 Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap'd  
 From her research hath been, that these are  
     walls —  
 Behold the Imperial Mount! 't is thus the mighty  
     falls.

## CVIII.

965 There is the moral of all human tales;  
 'T is but the same rehearsal of the past,  
 First Freedom and then Glory — when that  
     fails,  
 Wealth, vice, corruption, — barbarism at last.  
 And History, with all her volumes vast,  
 Hath but *one* page, — 't is better written here  
 970 Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amassed  
     All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,  
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask. — Away with  
     words, draw near,

## CIX.

Admire, exult — despise — laugh, weep, — for  
 here  
 There is such matter for all feeling : — Man !  
 975 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,  
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,  
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan  
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,  
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van  
 980 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd !  
 Where are its golden roofs ? where those who dared  
 to build ?

## CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,  
 Thou nameless column with the buried base !  
 What are the laurels of the Caesar's brow ?  
 985 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.  
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,  
 Titus' or Trajan's ? No — 't is that of Time :  
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace  
 Scoffing ; and apostolic statues climb  
 990 To crush the imperial urn whose ashes slept sublime,

## CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,  
 And looking to the stars. They had contain'd  
 A spirit which with these would find a home,  
 The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,  
 995 The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd  
 But yielded back his conquests : he was more  
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd  
 With household blood and wine, serenely wore  
 His sovereign virtues — still we Trajan's name adore.

## CXII.

1000 Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place  
 Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the  
 steep  
 Tarpeian, fittest goal of Treason's race,  
 The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap  
 Cured all ambition? Did the conquerors heap  
 1005 Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field be-  
 low,  
 A thousand years of silenced factions sleep —  
 The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,  
 And still the eloquent air breathes — burns with  
 Cicero!

## CXIII.

1010 The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:  
 Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,  
 From the first hour of empire in the bud  
 To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;  
 But long before had Freedom's face been  
 1015 veil'd,  
 And Anarchy assumed her attributes;  
 Till every lawless soldier who assail'd  
 Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,  
 Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

## CXIV.

1020 Then turn me to her latest tribune's name,  
 From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,  
 Redeemer of dark centuries of shame —  
 The friend of Petrarch — hope of Italy —  
 Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree  
 Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf  
 Even for thy tomb a garland let it be —

1025 The forum's champion, and the people's  
chief —

Her new-born Numa thou — with reign, alas, too  
brief.

## CXV.

Egeria, sweet creation of some heart  
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair  
As thine ideal breast! whate'er thou art  
1030 Or wert, — a young Aurora of the air,  
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;  
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,  
Who found a more than common votary there  
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,  
1035 Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied  
forth.

## CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled  
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face  
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,  
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,  
1040 Whose green, wild margin now no more erase  
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,  
Prison'd in marble; bubbling from the base  
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap  
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy  
creep,

## CXVII.

1045 Fantastically tangled. The green hills  
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the  
grass  
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills  
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;

1050 Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,  
 Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes  
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass ;  
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes  
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by  
 its skies.

## CXVIII.

1055 Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,  
 Egeria ! thy all heavenly bosom beating  
 For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover.  
 The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting  
 With her most starry canopy ; and seating  
 Thyself by thine adorer, what befell ?  
 1060 This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting  
 Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell  
 Haunted by holy Love — the earliest oracle !

## CXIX.

1065 And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,  
 Blend a celestial with a human heart ;  
 And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,  
 Share with immortal transports ? Could thine art  
 Make them indeed immortal, and impart  
 The purity of heaven to earthly joys,  
 Expel the venom and not blunt the dart —  
 1070 The dull satiety which all destroys —  
 And root from out the soul the deadly weed which  
 cloys ? .

## CXX.

Alas ! our young affections run to waste,  
 Or water but the desert ; whence arise  
 But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,

1075 Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,  
 Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,  
 And trees whose gums are poison ; — such the  
     plants  
 Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies  
     O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants  
 1080 For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

## CXXI.

1085 Oh Love ! no habitant of earth thou art —  
 An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,  
 A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,  
 But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see  
 The naked eye, thy form, as it should be ;  
 The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,  
 Even with its own desiring phantasy,  
 And to a thought such shape and image given,  
 As haunts the unquench'd soul — parch'd — wearied  
     — wrung — and riven.

## CXXII.

1090 1000 Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,  
 And fevers into false creation : — where,  
 Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath  
     seized ? —  
 In him alone. Can Nature show so fair ?  
 Where are the charms and virtues which we dare  
 1095 Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,  
 The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,  
 Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,  
 And overpowers the page where it would bloom  
     again ?

## CXXIII.

Who loves, raves — 't is youth's frenzy ; but the  
     cure

1100 Is bitterer still. As charm by charm unwinds  
 Which robed our idols, and we see too sure  
 Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's  
 Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds  
 The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,  
 1105 Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;  
 The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,  
 Seems ever near the prize,— wealthiest when most  
 undone.

## CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away —  
 Sick — sick; unfound the boon — unslaked the  
 thirst,  
 1110 Though to the last, in verge of our decay,  
 Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first —  
 But all too late,— so are we doubly curst.  
 Love, fame, ambition, avarice — 't is the same,  
 Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst —  
 1115 For all are meteors with a different name,  
 And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the  
 flame.

## CXXV.

Few — none — find what they love or could have  
 loved,  
 Though accident, blind contact, and the strong  
 Necessity of loving, have removed  
 1120 Antipathies — but to recur, ere long,  
 Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong;  
 And Circumstance, that unspiritual god  
 And miscreator, makes and helps along  
 Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,  
 1125 Whose touch turns Hope to dust,— the dust we all  
 have trod.

## CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature, 't is not in  
 The harmony of things,— this hard decree,  
 This uneradicable taint of sin,  
 This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree  
 1130 Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be  
 The skies which rain their plagues on men like  
 dew—  
 Disease, death, bondage — all the woes we see —  
 And worse, the woes we see not — which throb  
 through  
 The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

## CXXVII.

1135 Yet let us ponder boldly ; 't is a base  
 Abandonment of reason to resign  
 Our right of thought, our last and only place  
 Of refuge — this, at least, shall still be mine.  
 Though from our birth the faculty divine  
 1140 Is chain'd and tortured — cabin'd, cribb'd, con-  
 fined,  
 And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine  
 Too brightly on the unprepared mind,  
 The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the  
 blind.

## CXXVIII.

Arches on arches ! as it were that Rome,  
 1145 Collecting the chief trophies of her line,  
 Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,—  
 Her Coliseum stands ; the moonbeams shine  
 As 't were its natural torches, for divine  
 Should be the light which streams here, to illumine  
 1150 This long-explored but still exhaustless mine

Of contemplation ; and the azure gloom  
 Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

## CXXIX.

Hues which have words and speak to ye of heaven  
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,  
 1155 And shadows forth its glory. There is given  
 Unto the things of earth, which Time hath  
 bent,  
 A spirit's feeling ; and where he hath leant  
 His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power,  
 And magic in the ruin'd battlement,  
 1160 For which the palace of the present hour  
 Must yield its pomp and wait till ages are its dower.

## CXXX.

Oh, Time ! the beautifier of the dead,  
 Adorner of the ruin, comforter  
 And only healer when the heart hath bled —  
 1165 Time ! the corrector where our judgments err,  
 The test of truth, love,— sole philosopher,  
 For all besides are sophists, from thy thrift  
 Which never loses though it doth defer —  
 Time, the avenger ! unto thee I lift  
 1170 My hands and eyes and heart, and crave of thee a  
 gift :

## CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a  
 shrine  
 And temple more divinely desolate,  
 Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,  
 Ruins of years — though few, yet full of fate : —  
 1175 If thou hast ever seen me too elate,

Hear me not ; but if calmly I have borne  
 Good, and reserved my pride against the hate  
 Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn  
 This iron in my soul in vain — shall *they* not mourn ?

## CXXXII.

1180 And thou, who never yet of human wrong  
 Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis !  
 Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long —  
 Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,  
 And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss  
 1185 For that unnatural retribution — just,  
 Had it but been from hands less near — in this  
 Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust !  
 Dost thou not hear my heart ? — Awake ! thou shalt,  
 and must.

## CXXXIII.

1190 It is not that I may not have incurr'd  
 For my ancestral faults or mine the wound  
 I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd  
 With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound ;  
 But now my blood shall not sink in the ground ;  
 To thee I do devote it — *thou* shalt take  
 1195 The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and  
 found,  
 Which if *I* have not taken for the sake —  
 But let that pass — I sleep, but thou shalt yet  
 awake.

## CXXXIV.

1200 And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now  
 I shrink from what is suffer'd ; let him speak  
 Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,  
 Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak :  
 But in this page a record will I seek.

Not in the air shall these my words disperse,  
 Though I be ashes ; a far hour shall wreak  
 1205 The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,  
 And pile on human heads the mountain of my  
 curse !

## CXXXV.

That curse shall be Forgiveness. Have I not —  
 Hear me, my mother Earth ! behold it, Heaven ! —  
 Have I not had to wrestle with my lot ?  
 1210 Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven ?  
 Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,  
 Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied  
 away ?  
 And only not to desperation driven,  
 Because not altogether of such clay  
 1215 As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

## CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy  
 Have I not seen what human things could do ?  
 From the loud roar of foaming calumny  
 To the small whisper of the as paltry few,  
 1220 And subtler venom of the reptile crew,  
 The Janus glance of whose significant eye,  
 Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,  
 And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,  
 Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

## CXXXVII.

1225 But I have lived, and have not lived in vain :  
 My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,  
 And my frame perish even in conquering pain ;  
 But there is that within me which shall tire

1230 Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire ;  
 Something unearthly which they deem not of,  
 Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,  
 Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move  
 In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

## CXXXVIII.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread  
 power !  
 1235 Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here  
 Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour  
 With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear ;  
 Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear  
 Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene  
 1240 Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear  
 That we become a part of what has been,  
 And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

## CXXXIX.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,  
 In murmur'd pity or loud-roar'd applause,  
 1245 As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.  
 And wherefore slaughter'd ? wherefore, but be-  
 cause  
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,  
 And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not ?  
 What matters where we fall to fill the maws  
 1250 Of worms — on battle-plains or listed spot ?  
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

## CXL.

I see before me the Gladiator lie :  
 He leans upon his hand — his manly brow  
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,

1255 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—  
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now  
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
 1260 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the  
 wretch who won.

## CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
 Were with his heart and that was far away;  
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,  
 1265 *There* were his young barbarians all at play,  
*There* was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
 All this rush'd with his blood.—Shall he expire  
 And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your  
 ire!

## CXLII.

1270 But here, where Murder breathed her bloody  
 steam;  
 And there, where buzzing nations choked the  
 ways,  
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream  
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;  
 Here, where the Roman millions' blame or praise  
 1275 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,  
 My voice sounds much, and fall the stars' faint  
 rays  
 On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls  
 bow'd—  
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely  
 loud.

## CXLIII.

A ruin — yet what ruin ! From its mass  
 1280 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd ;  
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,  
 And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.  
 Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd ?  
 Alas ! developed, opens the decay,  
 1285 When the colossal fabric's form is near'd :  
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have  
 reft away.

## CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb  
 Its topmost arch and gently pauses there ;  
 1290 When the stars twinkle through the loops of  
 time,  
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
 The garland forest, which the gray walls wear  
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head ;  
 When the light shines serene but doth not  
 glare,  
 1295 Then in this magic circle raise the dead :  
 Heroes have trod this spot — 't is on their dust ye  
 tread.

## CXLV.

‘ While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;  
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall ;  
 And when Rome falls — the World.’ From our  
 own land  
 1300 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall  
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call  
 Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still  
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all ;

Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,  
 1305 The World, the same wide den — of thieves, or  
 what ye will.

## CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime —  
 Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,  
 From Jove to Jesus — spared and blest by time ;  
 Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods  
 1310 Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man  
 plods  
 His way through thorns to ashes — glorious dome !  
 Shalt thou not last ? Time's scythe and tyrants'  
 rods  
 Shiver upon thee — sanctuary and home  
 Of art and piety — Pantheon ! — pride of Rome !

## CXLVII.

1315 Relic of nobler days and noblest arts !  
 Despoil'd, yet perfect, with thy circle spreads  
 A holiness appealing to all hearts —  
 To art a model ; and to him who treads  
 Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds  
 1320 Her light through thy sole aperture ; to those  
 Who worship, here are altars for their beads ;  
 And they who feel for genius may repose  
 Their eyes on honour'd forms whose busts around  
 them close.

## CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light  
 1325 What do I gaze on ? Nothing : Look again !  
 Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight —  
 Two insulated phantoms of the brain :  
 It is not so ; I see them full and plain —

1330 An old man, and a female young and fair,  
 Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein  
 The blood is nectar; — but what doth she there  
 With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

## CXLIX.

1335 Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,  
 Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took  
 Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,  
 Blest into mother, in the innocent look  
 Or even the piping cry of lips that brook  
 No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives  
 Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook  
 1340 She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—  
 What may the fruit be yet? — I know not, Cain  
 was Eve's.

## CL.

1345 But here youth offers to old age the food,  
 The milk of his own gift: — it is her sire  
 To whom she renders back the debt of blood  
 Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire  
 While in those warm and lovely veins the fire  
 Of health and holy feeling can provide  
 Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises  
 higher  
 Than Egypt's river: — from that gentle side  
 1350 Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm  
 holds no such tide.

## CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way  
 Has not thy story's purity; it is  
 A constellation of a sweeter ray,  
 And sacred Nature triumphs more in this

1355 Reverse of her decree than in the abyss  
 Where sparkle distant worlds. Oh, holiest nurse !  
 No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss  
 To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source  
 With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

## CLII.

1360 Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd on high,  
 Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,  
 Colossal copyist of deformity,  
 Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's  
 Enormous model doom'd the artist's toils  
 1365 To build for giants, and for his vain earth,  
 His shrunken ashes, raise this dome. How smiles  
 The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,  
 To view the huge design which sprung from such  
 a birth !

## CLIII.

1370 But lo, the dome, the vast and wondrous dome  
 To which Diana's marvel was a cell,  
 Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb !  
 I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle —  
 Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell  
 The hyæna and the jackal in their shade ;  
 1375 I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell  
 Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd  
 Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem  
 pray'd ;

## CLIV.

1380 But thou, of temples old or altars new,  
 Standest alone, with nothing like to thee —  
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.  
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He  
 Forsook his former city, what could be,

Of earthly structures, in his honour piled  
 Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,  
 1385 Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all are aisled  
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

## CLV.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;  
 And why? it is not lessen'd; but thy mind,  
 Expanded by the genius of the spot,  
 1390 Has grown colossal, and can only find  
 A fit abode wherein appear enshrined  
 Thy hopes of immortality; and thou  
 Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,  
 See thy God face to face as thou dost now  
 1395 His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

## CLVI.

Thou movest — but increasing with the advance,  
 Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth  
 rise,  
 Deceived by its gigantic elegance;  
 Vastness which grows, but grows to harmonise —  
 1400 All musical in its immensities;  
 Rich marbles, richer painting, shrines where flame  
 The lamps of gold, and haughty dome which vies  
 In air with Earth's chief structures, though their  
 frame  
 Sits on the firm-set ground — and this the clouds  
 must claim.

## CLVII.

1405 Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must  
 break  
 To separate contemplation the great whole;  
 And as the ocean many bays will make,

That ask the eye — so here condense thy soul  
 To more immediate objects, and control  
 1410 Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart  
 Its eloquent proportions, and unroll  
 In mighty graduations, part by part,  
 The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

## CLVIII.

Not by its fault — but thine. Our outward sense  
 1415 Is but of gradual grasp: and as it is  
 That what we have of feeling most intense  
 Outstrips our faint expression; even so this  
 Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice  
 Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great  
 1420 Defies at first our Nature's littleness,  
 Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate  
 Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

## CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more  
 In such a survey than the sating gaze  
 1425 Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore  
 The worship of the place, or the mere praise  
 Of art and its great masters, who could raise  
 What former time, nor skill, nor thought could  
 plan;  
 The fountain of sublimity displays  
 1430 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man  
 Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions  
 can.

## CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see  
 Laocoon's torture dignifying pain —  
 A father's love and mortal's agony  
 1435 With an immortal's patience blending. Vain

The struggle ; vain, against the coiling strain  
 And gripe and deepening of the dragon's grasp,  
 The old man's clench ; the long envenom'd chain  
 Rivets the living links, the enormous asp  
 1440 Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

## CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,  
 The God of life and poesy and light,—  
 The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow  
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight ;  
 1445 The shaft hath just been shot — the arrow bright  
 With an immortal's vengeance ; in his eye  
 And nostril beautiful disdain and might  
 And majesty flash their full lightnings by,  
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

## CLXII.

1450 But in his delicate form — a dream of Love,  
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast  
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above  
 And madden'd in that vision — are exprest  
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd  
 1455 The mind with in its most unearthly mood,  
 When each conception was a heavenly guest —  
 A ray of immortality — and stood,  
 Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god !

## CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven  
 1460 The fire which we endure, it was repaid  
 By him to whom the energy was given  
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd  
 With an eternal glory — which, if made  
 By human hands, is not of human thought ;

1465 And Time himself hath hallow'd it, nor laid  
 One ringlet in the dust ; nor hath it caught  
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which  
 't was wrought.

## CLXIV.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,  
 The being who upheld it through the past ?  
 1470 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.  
 He is no more — these breathings are his last ;  
 His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,  
 And he himself as nothing : — if he was  
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd  
 1475 With forms which live and suffer — let that pass —  
 His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

## CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all  
 That we inherit in its mortal shroud,  
 And spreads the dim and universal pall  
 1480 Through which all things grow phantoms ; and  
 the cloud  
 Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,  
 Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays  
 A melancholy halo scarce allow'd  
 To hover on the verge of darkness ; — rays  
 1485 Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

## CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,  
 To gather what we shall be when the frame  
 Shall be resolved to something less than this  
 Its wretched essence ; and to dream of fame,  
 1490 And wipe the dust from off the idle name  
 We never more shall hear, — but never more.

Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:  
 It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore  
 These fardels of the heart — the heart whose sweat  
 was gore.

## CLXVII.

1495 Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,  
 A long low distant murmur of dread sound,  
 Such as arises when a nation bleeds  
 With some deep and immedicable wound;  
 Through storm and darkness yawns the rending  
 ground;

1500 The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief  
 Seems royal still, though with her head dis-  
 crownd;  
 And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief  
 She clasps a babe to whom her breast yields no  
 relief.

## CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?  
 1505 Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?  
 Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low  
 Some less majestic, less beloved head?  
 In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,  
 The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,  
 1510 Death hush'd that pang for ever; with thee fled  
 The present happiness and promised joy  
 Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to  
 cloy.

## CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety. — Can it be,  
 Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored!  
 1515 Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,  
 And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to  
 hoard

Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd  
 Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head  
 Beheld her Iris.— Thou, too, lonely lord,  
 1520 And desolate consort — vainly wert thou wed !  
 The husband of a year ! the father of the dead !

## CLXX.

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made ;  
 Thy bridal's fruit is ashes ; in the dust  
 The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid,  
 1525 The love of millions ! How we did intrust  
 Futurity to her ! and, though it must  
 Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd  
 Our children should obey her child, and bless'd  
 Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd  
 1530 Like stars to shepherds' eyes : — 't was but a meteor  
 beam'd.

## CLXXI.

Woe unto us, not her ; for she sleeps well :  
 The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue  
 Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,  
 Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung  
 1535 Its knell in princely ears till the o'er-stung  
 Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate  
 Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath  
 flung  
 Against their blind omnipotence a weight  
 Within the opposing scale which crushes soon or  
 late, —

## CLXXII.

1540 These might have been her destiny ; but no,  
 Our hearts deny it : and so young, so fair,  
 Good without effort, great without a foe ;  
 But now a bride and mother — and now *there!*

How many ties did that stern moment tear !  
 1545 From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast  
 Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,  
 Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest  
 The land which loved thee so that none could love  
 thee best.

## CLXXXIII.

Lo, Nemi ! navell'd in the woody hills  
 1550 So far, that the uprooting wind which tears  
 The oak from his foundation, and which spills  
 The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears  
 Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares  
 The oval mirror of thy glassy lake ; —  
 1555 And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears  
 A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,  
 All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

## CLXXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves  
 Shine from a sister valley ; and afar  
 1560 The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves  
 The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,  
 'Arms and the Man,' whose re-ascending star  
 Rose o'er an empire : but beneath thy right  
 Tully reposed from Rome ; and where yon bar  
 1565 Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight  
 The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's de-  
 light.

## CLXXXV.

But I forget. — My Pilgrim's shrine is won,  
 And he and I must part — so let it be :  
 His task and mine alike are nearly done ;  
 1570 Yet once more let us look upon the sea ;

The midland ocean breaks on him and me,  
 And from the Alban Mount we now behold  
 Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when we  
 Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold

1575 Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine  
 roll'd

## CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades. Long years —  
 Long, though not very many — since have done  
 Their work on both ; some suffering and some  
 tears

Have left us nearly where we had begun :  
 1580 Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run ;  
 We have had our reward, and it is here, —  
 That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,  
 And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear  
 As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

## CLXXVII.

1585 Oh that the Desert were my dwelling-place,  
 With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
 That I might all forget the human race,  
 And, hating no one, love but only her !  
 Ye Elements, in whose ennobling stir  
 1590 I feel myself exalted, can ye not  
 Accord me such a being ? Do I err  
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot,  
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot ?

## CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
 There is society where none intrudes,  
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :

I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
 From these our interviews, in which I steal  
 1600 From all I may be or have been before,  
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
 What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

## CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean, roll !  
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;  
 1605 Man marks the earth with ruin, his control  
 Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 1610 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and un-  
 known.

## CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths, thy fields  
 Are not a spoil for him, — thou dost arise  
 And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he  
 wields  
 1615 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies  
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
 1620 And dashest him again to earth : — there let him  
 lay.

## CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake  
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make

1825 Their clay creator the vain title take  
 Of lord of thee and arbiter of war,—  
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
 Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

## CLXXXII.

1830 Thy shores are empires, changed in all save  
 thee —  
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?  
 Thy waters wash'd them power while they were  
 free,  
 And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey  
 The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay  
 1835 Has dried up realms to deserts : — not so thou,  
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play ;  
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow ;  
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

## CLXXXIII.

1840 Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
 Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,  
 Calm or convulsed — in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
 Dark-heaving ; — boundless, endless, and sub-  
 lime —  
 The image of Eternity — the throne  
 1845 Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
 The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
 Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless,  
 alone.

## CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy  
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be

1650 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward. From a boy  
 I wanton'd with thy breakers — they to me  
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
 Made them a terror — 't was a pleasing fear,  
 For I was as it were a child of thee,  
 1655 And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
 And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.

## CLXXXV.

My task is done — my song hath ceased — my  
 theme  
 Has died into an echo; it is fit  
 The spell should break of this protracted dream.  
 1660 The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath  
 lit  
 My midnight lamp — and what is writ, is writ, —  
 Would it were worthier! but I am not now  
 That which I have been — and my visions flit  
 Less palpably before me — and the glow  
 1665 Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and  
 low.

## CLXXXVI.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been —  
 A sound which makes us linger; — yet — fare-  
 well!  
 Ye, who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene  
 Which is his last, if in your memories dwell  
 1670 A thought which once was his, if on ye swell  
 A single recollection, not in vain  
 He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell;  
 Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,  
 If such there were — with *you*, the moral of his  
 strain!

## THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

A FABLE.

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE words "a fable" which Byron added to the title of this poem should put one on his guard against taking the poem as an historical narrative, or treating it in its parts as true to the literal facts of Bonnivard's experience. Byron wrote the poem in June, 1816, at a small inn in the little village of Ouchy, near Lausanne on the shores of Lake Geneva, where he happened to be detained a couple of days by stress of weather. In a notice prefixed to the poem he wrote : "When this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavored to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues." As it was he had been stirred by the tradition of the patriot's confinement in the castle which he had just visited, and with his ardent passion for political liberty which found expression later in Italy and in Greece, he used the incident for an impassioned poetic monologue.

The tourist to-day who visits the castle of Chillon finds abundant historical information respecting the castle and the confinement of Bonnivard. Byron's poem has lifted the place into great distinction. The castle stands on a rock in the lake, not far from Montreux, and is approached by a bridge. In the interior is a range of dungeons. Eight pillars are shown, one of which is half built into the wall. The prisoners, who were sometimes reformers, sometimes prisoners of state, were fettered to the pillars, and the pavement is worn with the footsteps of their brief pace. Francis Bonnivard was born in 1496. He was of gentle birth and inherited a rich priory near Geneva. When the Duke of Savoy attacked the republic of Geneva, Bonnivard joined in the defence, and became thus the enemy of the Duke. Subsequently, when in the service of the republic, he fell into the power of the Duke, who imprisoned him for six years in the castle of Chillon. He was released by the Genevese in 1536, and led a stormy existence until his death in 1571.

## I.

MY hair is gray, but not with years,  
 Nor grew it white  
 In a single night,  
 As men's have grown from sudden fears.

6 My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,  
 But rusted with a vile repose,  
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,  
 And mine has been the fate of those  
 To whom the goodly earth and air  
 10 Are banned, and barred — forbidden fare ;  
 But this was for my father's faith  
 I suffered chains and courted death ;  
 That father perished at the stake  
 For tenets he would not forsake ;

15 And for the same his lineal race  
 In darkness found a dwelling-place ;  
 We were seven — who now are one,  
 Six in youth, and one in age,  
 Finished as they had begun,

20 Proud of Persecution's rage ;  
 One in fire, and two in field,  
 Their belief with blood have sealed :  
 Dying as their father died,  
 For the God their foes denied ; —

25 Three were in a dungeon cast,  
 Of whom this wreck is left the last.

## II.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould  
 In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,  
 There are seven columns massy and gray,  
 30 Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,

A sunbeam which hath lost its way,  
 And through the crevice and the cleft  
 Of the thick wall is fallen and left :  
 Creeping o'er the floor so damp,  
 35 Like a marsh's meteor lamp :  
 And in each pillar there is a ring,  
 And in each ring there is a chain ;  
 That iron is a cankering thing,  
 For in these limbs its teeth remain,  
 40 With marks that will not wear away  
 Till I have done with this new day,  
 Which now is painful to these eyes,  
 Which have not seen the sun so rise  
 For years — I cannot count them o'er,  
 45 I lost their long and heavy score  
 When my last brother drooped and died,  
 And I lay living by his side.

## III.

They chained us each to a column stone,  
 And we were three — yet, each alone ;  
 50 We could not move a single pace,  
 We could not see each other's face,  
 But with that pale and livid light  
 That made us strangers in our sight :  
 And thus together — yet apart,  
 55 Fettered in hand, but joined in heart ;  
 'T was still some solace, in the dearth  
 Of the pure elements of earth,  
 To hearken to each other's speech,  
 And each turn comforter to each

31. One of the impressive sights in the dungeon now, as it was in Byron's day, is the beams of the setting sun streaming through the narrow loopholes into the gloomy recesses.

60 With some new hope or legend old,  
 Or song heroically bold ;  
 But even these at length grew cold.  
 Our voices took a dreary tone,  
 An echo of the dungeon stone,

65 A grating sound — not full and free  
 As they of yore were wont to be ;  
 It might be fancy — but to me  
 They never sounded like our own.

## IV.

I was the eldest of the three,

70 And to uphold and cheer the rest  
 I ought to do — and did my best —  
 And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,  
 Because our mother's brow was given

75 To him — with eyes as blue as heaven,  
 For him my soul was sorely moved :  
 And truly might it be distressed  
 To see such bird in such a nest ;  
 For he was beautiful as day —

80 (When day was beautiful to me  
 As to young eagles being free) —  
 A polar day, which will not see  
 A sunset till its summer's gone,  
 Its sleepless summer of long light,

85 The snow-clad offspring of the sun :  
 And thus he was as pure and bright,  
 And in his natural spirit gay,  
 With tears for naught but others' ills,  
 And then they flowed like mountain rills,

90 Unless he could assuage the woe  
 Which he abhorred to view below.

## V.

The other was as pure of mind,  
 But formed to combat with his kind ;  
 Strong in his frame, and of a mood  
 95 Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,  
 And perished in the foremost rank  
 With joy : — but not in chains to pine :  
 His spirit withered with their clank,  
 I saw it silently decline —  
 100 And so perchance in sooth did mine :  
 But yet I forced it on to cheer  
 Those relics of a home so dear.  
 He was a hunter of the hills,  
 Had followed there the deer and wolf ;  
 105 To him this dungeon was a gulf,  
 And fettered feet the worst of ills.

## VI.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls,  
 A thousand feet in depth below  
 Its massy waters meet and flow ;  
 110 Thus much the fathom-line was sent  
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,  
 Which round about the wave in thrals :  
 A double dungeon wall and wave  
 Have made — and like a living grave.  
 115 Below the surface of the lake  
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay,  
 We heard it ripple night and day ;  
 Sounding o'er our heads it knocked  
 And I have felt the winter's spray  
 120 Wash through the bars when winds were high  
 107. *Lake Leman* is another name for Lake Geneva.

And wanton in the happy sky ;  
 And then the very rock hath rocked,  
 And I have felt it shake, unshocked,  
 Because I could have smiled to see  
 125 The death that would have set me free.

## VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,  
 I said his mighty heart declined,  
 He loathed and put away his food ;  
 It was not that 't was coarse and rude,  
 130 For we were used to hunter's fare,  
 And for the like had little care :  
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat  
 Was changed for water from the moat,  
 Our bread was such as captive's tears  
 135 Have moistened many a thousand years,  
 Since man first pent his fellow men  
 Like brutes within an iron den ;  
 But what were these to us or him ?  
 These wasted not his heart or limb ;  
 140 My brother's soul was of that mould  
 Which in a palace had grown cold,  
 Had his free breathing been denied  
 The range of the steep mountain's side  
 But why delay the truth ? — he died.  
 145 I saw, and could not hold his head,  
 Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead, —  
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,  
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.  
 He died, and they unlocked his chain,  
 150 And scooped for him a shallow grave  
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.  
 I begged them, as a boon, to lay

His corse in dust whereon the day  
 Might shine — it was a foolish thought,  
 155 But then within my brain it wrought,  
 That even in death his freeborn breast  
 In such a dungeon could not rest.  
 I might have spared my idle prayer —  
 They coldly laughed — and laid him there :  
 160 The flat and turfless earth above  
 The being we so much did love ;  
 His empty chain above it leant,  
 Such murderer's fitting monument !

## VIII.

But he, the favorite and the flower,  
 165 Most cherished since his natal hour,  
 His mother's image in fair face,  
 The infant love of all his race,  
 His martyred father's dearest thought,  
 My latest care, for whom I sought  
 170 To hoard my life, that his might be  
 Less wretched now, and one day free ;  
 He, too, who yet had held untired  
 A spirit natural or inspired —  
 He, too, was struck, and day by day  
 175 Was withered on the stalk away.  
 Oh, God ! it is a fearful thing  
 To see the human soul take wing  
 In any shape, in any mood : —  
 I 've seen it rushing forth in blood,  
 180 I 've seen it on the breaking ocean  
 Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,  
 I 've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
 Of Sin delirious with its dread :  
 But these were horrors — this was woe

185 Unmixed with such — but sure and slow ;  
He faded, and so calm and meek,  
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,  
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,  
And grieved for those he left behind ;

190 With all the while a cheek whose bloom  
Was as a mockery of the tomb,  
Whose tints as gently sunk away  
As a departing rainbow's ray —  
An eye of most transparent light,

195 That almost made the dungeon bright,  
And not a word of murmur — not  
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —  
A little talk of better days,  
A little hope my own to raise,

200 For I was sunk in silence — lost  
In this last loss, of all the most ;  
And then the sighs he would suppress  
Of fainting nature's feebleness,  
More slowly drawn, grew less and less :

205 I listened, but I could not hear —  
I called, for I was wild with fear ;  
I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread  
Would not be thus admonishèd ;  
I called, and thought I heard a sound —

210 I burst my chain with one strong bound,  
And rushed to him : — I found him not,  
*I* only stirred in this black spot,  
*I* only lived — *I* only drew  
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;

215 The last — the sole, — the dearest link  
Between me and the eternal brink,  
Which bound me to my failing race,  
Was broken in this fatal place.

One on the earth, and one beneath —  
 220 My brothers — both had ceased to breathe;  
 I took that hand which lay so still,  
 Alas! my own was full as chill;  
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,  
 But felt that I was still alive —  
 225 A frantic feeling, when we know  
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.  
 I know not why  
 I could not die,  
 I had no earthly hope — but faith,  
 230 And that forbade a selfish death.

## IX.

What next befell me then and there  
 I know not well — I never knew —  
 First came the loss of light, and air,  
 And then of darkness too :  
 235 I had no thought, no feeling — none —  
 Among the stones I stood a stone,  
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,  
 As shrubless crags within the mist ;  
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray,  
 240 It was not night — it was not day,  
 It was not even the dungeon-light,  
 So hateful to my heavy sight,  
 But vacancy absorbing space,  
 And fixedness — without a place ;  
 245 There were no stars — no earth — no time —  
 No check — no change — no good — no crime —  
 But silence, and a stirless breath  
 Which neither was of life nor death ;  
 A sea of stagnant idleness,  
 250 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless !

## X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—  
It was the carol of a bird;  
It ceased, and then it came again,  
The sweetest song ear ever heard,  
255 And mine was thankful till my eyes  
Ran over with the glad surprise,  
And they that moment could not see  
I was the mate of misery;  
But then by dull degrees came back  
260 My senses to their wonted track,  
I saw the dungeon walls and floor  
Close slowly round me as before,  
I saw the glimmer of the sun  
Creeping as it before had done,  
265 But through the crevice where it came  
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,  
And tamer than upon the tree;  
A lovely bird, with azure wings,  
And song that said a thousand things,  
270 And seemed to say them all for me!  
I never saw its like before,  
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:  
It seemed like me to want a mate,  
But was not half so desolate,  
275 And it was come to love me when  
None lived to love me so again,  
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,  
Had brought me back to feel and think.  
I know not if it late were free,  
280 Or broke its cage to perch on mine,  
But knowing well captivity,  
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!

Or if it were, in wingèd guise,  
A visitant from Paradise ;

285 For — Heaven forgive that thought ! the while  
Which made me both to weep and smile ;  
I sometimes deemed that it might be  
My brother's soul come down to me ;  
But then at last away it flew,

290 And then 't was mortal — well I knew,  
For he would never thus have flown,  
And left me twice so doubly lone, —  
Lone — as the corse within its shroud,  
Lone — as a solitary cloud,

295 A single cloud on a sunny day,  
While all the rest of heaven is clear,  
A frown upon the atmosphere,  
That hath no business to appear  
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

## XI.

300 A kind of change came in my fate,  
My keepers grew compassionate ;  
I know not what had made them so,  
They were inured to sights of woe,  
But so it was : — my broken chain

305 With links unfastened did remain,  
And it was liberty to stride  
Along my cell from side to side,  
And up and down, and then athwart,  
And tread it over every part ;

310 And round the pillars one by one,  
Returning where my walk begun,  
Avoiding only, as I trod,  
My brothers' graves without a sod ;  
For if I thought with heedless tread

315 My step profaned their lowly bed,  
 My breath came gaspingly and thick,  
 And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

## XII.

I made a footing in the wall,  
 It was not therefrom to escape,  
 320 For I had buried one and all  
 Who loved me in a human shape ;  
 And the whole earth would henceforth be  
 A wider prison unto me :  
 No child — no sire — no kin had I,  
 325 No partner in my misery ;  
 I thought of this, and I was glad,  
 For thought of them had made me mad ;  
 But I was curious to ascend  
 To my barred windows, and to bend  
 330 Once more, upon the mountains high,  
 The quiet of a loving eye.

## XIII.

I saw them — and they were the same,  
 They were not changed like me in frame ;  
 I saw their thousand years of snow  
 335 On high — their wide long lake below,  
 And the blue Rhone in fullest flow ;  
 I heard the torrents leap and gush  
 O'er channelled rock and broken bush ;  
 I saw the white-walled distant town,  
 340 And whiter sails go skimming down ;  
 And then there was a little isle,

341. Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its cir-

Which in my very face did smile,  
The only one in view ;  
A small green isle it seemed no more,  
345 Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,  
But in it there were three tall trees,  
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,  
And by it there were waters flowing,  
And on it there were young flowers growing,  
350 Of gentle breath and hue.  
The fish swam by the castle wall,  
And they seemed joyous each and all ;  
The eagle rode the rising blast,  
Methought he never flew so fast  
355 As then to me he seemed to fly,  
And then new tears came in my eye,  
And I felt troubled — and would fain  
I had not left my recent chain ;  
And when I did descend again,  
360 The darkness of my dim abode  
Fell on me as a heavy load ;  
It was as is a new-dug grave,  
Closing o'er one we sought to save, —  
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,  
365 Had almost need of such a rest.

## XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,  
I kept no count — I took no note,  
I had no hope my eyes to raise,  
And clear them of their dreary mote ;  
370 At last men came to set me free,

cumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view. BYRON.

I asked not why, and recked not where,  
 It was at length the same to me,  
 Fettered or fetterless to be,

I learned to love despair.

375 And thus when they appeared at last,  
 And all my bonds aside were cast,  
 These heavy walls to me had grown  
 A hermitage — and all my own !

380 And half I felt as they were come  
 To tear me from a second home :

With spiders I had friendship made, ↘  
 And watched them in their sullen trade,  
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,  
 And why should I feel less than they ?

385 We were all inmates of one place,  
 And I, the monarch of each race,  
 Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell !  
 In quiet we had learned to dwell —

My very chains and I grew friends,

390 So much a long communion tends  
 To make us what we are : — even I  
 Regained my freedom with a sigh. ↘

### MAZEPPA.

#### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

This poem was written at Venice and Ravenna in the autumn of 1818. Byron drew his story from an incident related by Voltaire in his *History of Charles XII.*, which is as follows :—

The Ukraine (the country of the Cossacks) has always aspired to liberty ; but being surrounded by Muscovy, the dominions of the Grand Seignior, and Poland, it has been obliged to choose a protector, and, consequently, a master, in one of these three States. The Ukrainians at first put themselves under the

protection of the Poles, who treated them with great severity. They afterwards submitted to the Russians, who governed them with despotic sway. They had originally the privilege of electing a prince under the name of general ; but they were soon deprived of that right, and their general was nominated by the court of Moscow.

The person who then filled that station was a Polish gentleman, named Mazeppa, and born in the palatinate of Podolia. He had been brought up as a page to John Casimir, and had received some tincture of learning in his court. An intrigue which he had had in his youth with the lady of a Polish gentleman, having been discovered, the husband caused him to be bound stark naked upon a wild horse, and let him go in that condition.\* The horse, which had been brought out of Ukraine, returned to its own country, and carried Mazeppa along with it, half-dead with hunger and fatigue. Some of the country people gave him assistance ; and he lived among them for a long time, and signalized himself in several excursions against the Tartars. The superiority of his knowledge gained him great respect among the Cossacks ; and his reputation daily increasing, the czar found it necessary to make him prince of the Ukraine.

### I.

'TWAS after dread Pultowa's day,  
 When fortune left the royal Swede,  
 Around a slaughter'd army lay,  
 No more to combat and to bleed.  
 5 The power and glory of the war,  
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,  
 Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,  
 And Moscow's walls were safe again,  
 Until a day more dark and drear,  
 10 And a more memorable year,  
 Should give to slaughter and to shame  
 A mightier host and haughtier name ;  
 A greater wreck, a deeper fall,  
 A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

## II.

15 Such was the hazard of the die ;  
The wounded Charles was taught to fly  
By day and night through field and flood,  
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood ;  
For thousands fell that flight to aid :

16 And not a voice was heard t' upbraid  
Ambition in his humbled hour,  
When truth had naught to dread from power.  
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave  
His own — and died the Russians' slave.

17 This too sinks after many a league  
Of well-sustain'd, but vain fatigue ;  
And in the depth of forests darkling,  
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling —  
The beacons of surrounding foes —

18 A king must lay his limbs at length.  
Are these the laurels and repose  
For which the nations strain their strength ?  
They laid him by a savage tree,  
In outworn nature's agony ;

19 His wounds were stiff — his limbs were stark —  
The heavy hour was chill and dark ;  
The fever in his blood forbade  
A transient slumber's fitful aid :  
And thus it was ; but yet through all,

20 Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,  
And made, in this extreme of ill,  
His pangs the vassals of his will :  
All silent and subdued were they,  
As once the nations round him lay.

## III.

45 A band of chiefs ! — alas ! how few,  
 Since but the fleeting of a day  
 Had thinn'd it ; but this wreck was true  
 And chivalrous : upon the clay  
 Each sate him down, all sad and mute,

50 Beside his monarch and his steed,  
 For danger levels man and brute,  
 And all are fellows in their need.  
 Among the rest, Mazeppa made  
 His pillow in an old oak's shade —

55 Himself as rough, and scarce less old,  
 The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold.  
 But first, outspent with his long course,  
 The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,  
 And made for him a leafy bed,

60 And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,  
 And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,  
 And joy'd to see how well he fed ;  
 For until now he had the dread  
 His wearied courser might refuse

65 To browse beneath the midnight dews :  
 But he was hardy as his lord,  
 And little cared for bed and board ;  
 But spirited and docile too ;  
 Whate'er was to be done, would do.

70 Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,  
 All Tartar-like he carried him ;  
 Obey'd his voice, and came to call,  
 And knew him in the midst of all :  
 Though thousands were around, — and Night,

75 Without a star, pursued her flight, —

56. *Hetman*, a Cossack chief.

That steed from sunset until dawn  
His chief would follow like a fawn.

## IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,  
And laid his lance beneath his oak,  
80 Felt if his arms in order good  
The long day's march had well withstood —  
If still the powder fill'd the pan,  
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock —  
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,  
85 And whether they had chafed his belt —  
And next the venerable man,  
From out his haversack and can,  
Prepared and spread his slender stock ;  
And to the monarch and his men  
90 The whole or portion offer'd then  
With far less of inquietude  
Than courtiers at a banquet would.  
And Charles of this his slender share  
With smiles partook a moment there,  
95 To force of cheer a greater show,  
And seem above both wounds and woe ; —  
And then he said — “ Of all our band,  
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,  
In skirmish, march, or forage, none  
100 Can less have said or more have done  
Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth  
So fit a pain had never birth,  
Since Alexander's days till now,  
As thy Bucephalus and thou :  
105 All Scythia's fame to thine should yield  
For pricking on o'er flood and field.”  
Mazeppa answer'd — “ Ill betide

The school wherein I learn'd to ride!"

Quoth Charles—"Old Hetman, wherefore so,  
 110 Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?"

Mazeppa said—"T were long to tell;  
 And we have many a league to go,  
 With every now and then a blow,  
 And ten to one at least the foe,

115 Before our steeds may graze at ease  
 Beyond the swift Borysthenes;  
 And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,  
 And I will be the sentinel  
 Of this your troop."—"But I request,"

120 Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell  
 This tale of thine, and I may reap,  
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;  
 For at this moment from my eyes  
 The hope of present slumber flies."

125 "Well, sire, with such a hope, I'll track  
 My seventy years of memory back:  
 I think 't was in my twentieth spring,—  
 Ay, 't was,—when Casimir was king—  
 John Casimir,—I was his page

130 Six summers, in my earlier age.  
 A learned monarch, faith! was he,  
 And most unlike your majesty:  
 He made no wars, and did not gain  
 New realms to lose them back again;

135 And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)  
 He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;  
 Not that he had no cares to vex,  
 He loved the muses and the sex;  
 And sometimes these so froward are,

140 They made him wish himself at war;

But soon his wrath being o'er, he took  
 Another mistress, or new book.  
 And then he gave prodigious fêtes —  
 All Warsaw gather'd round his gates  
 145 To gaze upon his splendid court,  
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port :  
 He was the Polish Solomon,  
 So sung his poets, all but one,  
 Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,  
 150 And boasted that he could not flatter.  
 It was a court of jousts and mimes, . . .  
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes ;  
 Even I for once produced some verses,  
 And sign'd my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'  
 155 There was a certain Palatine,  
 A count of far and high descent,  
 Rich as a salt or silver mine ;  
 And he was proud, ye may divine,  
 As if from heaven he had been sent.  
 160 He had such wealth in blood and ore  
 As few could match beneath the throne ;  
 And he would gaze upon his store,  
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,  
 Until by some confusion led,  
 165 Which almost look'd like want of head,  
 He thought their merits were his own.  
 His wife was not of his opinion —  
 His junior she by thirty years —  
 Grew daily tired of his dominion ;  
 170 And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,  
 To virtue a few farewell tears,  
 A restless dream or two, some glances  
 At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,  
 157. In Poland the salt mines were a great source of wealth

Awaited but the usual chances,  
 175 (Those happy accidents which render  
 The coldest dames so very tender,) To deck her Count with titles given,  
 'T is said, as passports into heaven ;  
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast  
 180 Of these, who have deserved them most.

## V.

“ I was a goodly stripling then ;  
 At seventy years I so may say,  
 That there were few, or boys or men,  
 Who, in my dawning time of day,  
 185 Of vassal or of knight’s degree,  
 Could vie in vanities with me ;  
 For I had strength, youth, gaiety,  
 A port, not like to this ye see,  
 But as smooth as all is rugged now ;  
 190 For time, and care, and war, have plough’d  
 My very soul from out my brow ;  
 And thus I should be disavow’d  
 By all my kind and kin, could they  
 Compare my day and yesterday.  
 195 This change was wrought, too, long ere age  
 Had ta’en my features for his page :  
 With years, ye know, have not declined  
 My strength, my courage, or my mind,  
 Or at this hour I should not be  
 200 Telling old tales beneath a tree,  
 With starless skies my canopy.  
 But let me on : Theresa’s form —  
 Methinks it glides before me now,  
 Between me and yon chestnut’s bough,  
 205 The memory is so quick and warm ;

And yet I find no words to tell  
 The shape of her I loved so well.  
 She had the Asiatic eye,

Such as our Turkish neighbourhood,

210 Hath mingled with our Polish blood,

Dark as above us is the sky ;

But through it stole a tender light,

Like the first moonrise of midnight ;

Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,

215 Which seem'd to melt to its own beam ;

All love, half languor, and half fire,

Like saints that at the stake expire,

And lift their raptured looks on high

As though it were a joy to die ; —

220 A brow like a midsummer lake,

Transparent with the sun therein,

When waves no murmur dare to make,

And heaven beholds her face within ;

A cheek and lip — but why proceed ?

225 I loved her then — I love her still ;

And such as I am, love indeed

In fierce extremes — in good and ill ;

But still we love even in our rage,

And haunted to our very age

230 With the vain shadow of the past,

As is Mazeppa to the last.

## VI.

“ We met — we gazed — I saw, and sigh'd,  
 She did not speak, and yet replied :

There are ten thousand tones and signs

235 We hear and see, but none defines —

Involuntary sparks of thought,

Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought

And form a strange intelligence  
 Alike mysterious and intense,

240 Which link the burning chain that binds,  
 Without their will, young hearts and minds :  
 Conveying, as the electric wire,  
 We know not how, the absorbing fire. —  
 I saw, and sigh'd — in silence wept,

245 And still reluctant distance kept,  
 Until I was made known to her,  
 And we might then and there confer  
 Without suspicion — then, even then,  
 I long'd, and was resolved to speak ;

250 But on my lips they died again,  
 The accents tremulous and weak,  
 Until one hour. — There is a game,  
 A frivolous and foolish play,  
 Wherewith we while away the day ;

255 It is — I have forgot the name —  
 And we to this, it seems, were set,  
 By some strange chance, which I forget :  
 I reckon'd not if I won or lost,  
 It was enough for me to be

260 So near to hear, and oh ! to see  
 The being whom I loved the most.  
 I watch'd her as a sentinel,  
 (May ours this dark night watch as well !)  
 Until I saw, and thus it was,

265 That she was pensive, nor perceived  
 Her occupation, nor was grieved  
 Nor glad to lose or gain ; but still  
 Play'd on for hours, as if her will  
 Yet bound her to the place, though not

270 That hers might be the winning lot.  
 Then through my brain the thought did pass

Even as a flash of lightning there,  
 That there was something in her air  
 Which would not doom me to despair ;  
 275 And on the thought my words broke forth,  
     All incoherent as they were —  
 Their eloquence was little worth,  
 But yet she listen'd — 't is enough —  
     Who listens once will listen twice ;  
 280 Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,  
     And one refusal no rebuff.

## VII.

“ I loved, and was beloved again —  
     They tell me, sire, you never knew  
     Those gentle frailties ; if 't is true,  
 285 I shorten all my joy or pain ;  
     To you 't would seem absurd as vain ;  
     But all men are not born to reign,  
     Or o'er their passions, or as you  
     Thus o'er themselves and nations too.  
 290 I am — or rather *was* — a prince,  
     A chief of thousands, and could lead  
     Them on where each would foremost bleed ;  
     But could not o'er myself evince  
     The like control. — But to resume :  
 295 I loved, and was beloved again ;  
     In sooth, it is a happy doom,  
     But yet where happiest ends in pain. —  
     We met in secret, and the hour  
     Which led me to that lady's bower  
 300 Was fiery Expectation's dower.  
     My days and nights were nothing — all  
     Except that hour which doth recall  
     In the long lapse from youth to age

No other like itself — I 'd give  
 305 The Ukraine back again to live  
 It o'er once more — and be a page,  
 The happy page, who was the lord  
 Of one soft heart and his own sword,  
 And had no other gem nor wealth  
 310 Save nature's gift of youth and health. —  
 We met in secret — doubly sweet,  
 Some say, they find it so to meet ;  
 I know not that — I would have given  
 My life but to have call'd her mine  
 315 In the full view of earth and heaven ;  
 For I did oft and long repine  
 That we could only meet by stealth.

## VIII.

“ For lovers there are many eyes,  
 And such there were on us ; — the devil  
 320 On such occasions should be civil —  
 The devil ! — I 'm loth to do him wrong,  
 It might be some untoward saint,  
 Who would not be at rest too long  
 But to his pious bile gave vent —  
 325 But one fair night, some lurking spies  
 Surprised and seized us both.  
 The Count was something more than wroth —  
 I was unarm'd ; but if in steel,  
 All cap-à-pie from head to heel,  
 330 What 'gainst their numbers could I do ? —  
 'T was near his castle, far away  
 From city or from succour near,  
 And almost on the break of day ;  
 I did not think to see another,  
 335 My moments seem'd reduced to few ;

And with one prayer to Mary Mother,  
 And, it may be, a saint or two,  
 As I resign'd me to my fate,  
 They led me to the castle gate :

340 Theresa's doom I never knew,  
 Our lot was henceforth separate —  
 An angry man, ye may opine,  
 Was he, the proud Count Palatine ;  
 And he had reason good to be,

345 But he was most enraged lest such  
 An accident should chance to touch  
 Upon his future pedigree ;  
 Nor less amazed, that such a blot  
 His noble 'scutcheon should have got,

350 While he was highest of his line ;  
 Because unto himself he seem'd  
 The first of men, nor less he deem'd  
 In others' eyes, and most in mine.  
 'Sdeath ! with a *page* — perchance a king

355 Had reconciled him to the thing ;  
 But with a stripling of a *page* —  
 I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

## IX.

“ ‘ Bring forth the horse ! ’ — the horse was brought ;  
 In truth, he was a noble steed,  
 360 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,  
 Who look'd as though the speed of thought  
 Were in his limbs ; but he was wild,  
 Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,  
 With spur and bridle undefiled —

365 ‘ T was but a day he had been caught ;  
 And snorting, with erected mane,  
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,

In the full foam of wrath and dread  
 To me the desert-born was led.

370 They bound me on, that menial throng,  
 Upon his back with many a thong ;  
 They loosed him with a sudden lash —  
 Away ! — away ! — and on we dash ! —  
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

## X.

375 “ Away ! — away ! — My breath was gone —  
 I saw not where he hurried on :  
 'T was scarcely yet the break of day,  
 And on he foam'd — away ! — away ! —  
 The last of human sounds which rose,  
 380 As I was darted from my foes,  
 Was the wild shout of savage laughter,  
 Which on the wind came roaring after  
 A moment from that rabble rout :  
 With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,  
 385 And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane  
 Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,  
 And writhing half my form about,  
 Howl'd back my curse ; but 'midst the tread,  
 The thunder of my courser's speed,  
 390 Perchance they did not hear nor heed :  
 It vexes me — for I would fain  
 Have paid their insult back again.  
 I paid it well in after days :  
 There is not of that castle gate,  
 395 Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,  
 Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left ;  
 Nor of its fields a blade of grass,  
 Save what grows on a ridge of wall,  
 Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall ;

400 And many a time ye there might pass,  
 Nor dream that e'er that fortress was :  
 I saw its turrets in a blaze,  
 Their crackling battlements all cleft,  
 And the hot lead pour down like rain

405 From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,  
 Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.  
 They little thought that day of pain,  
 When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,  
 They bade me to destruction dash,

410 That one day I should come again,  
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank  
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.  
 They play'd me then a bitter prank,  
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,

415 They bound me to his foaming flank :  
 At length I play'd them one as frank —  
 For time at last sets all things even —  
 And if we do but watch the hour,  
 There never yet was human power

420 Which could evade, if unforgiven,  
 The patient search and vigil long  
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.

## XI.

“ Away, away, my steed and I,  
 Upon the pinions of the wind.

425 All human dwellings left behind ;  
 We sped like meteors through the sky,  
 When with its crackling sound the night  
 Is chequer'd with the northern light.  
 Town — village — none were on our track,

430 But a wild plain of far extent,  
 And bounded by a forest black ;  
 And, save the scarce seen battlement

On distant heights of some strong hold,  
 Against the Tartars built of old,  
 435 No trace of man : the year before  
     A Turkish army had march'd o'er ;  
     And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,  
     The verdure flies the bloody sod.  
     The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,  
 440    And a low breeze crept moaning by —  
         I could have answer'd with a sigh —  
         But fast we fled, away, away —  
         And I could neither sigh nor pray ;  
         And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain  
 445 Upon the courser's bristling mane ;  
     But, snorting still with rage and fear,  
     He flew upon his far career.  
     At times I almost thought, indeed,  
     He must have slacken'd in his speed ;  
 450 But no — my bound and slender frame  
         Was nothing to his angry might,  
         And merely like a spur became :  
         Each motion which I made to free  
         My swoln limbs from their agony  
 455    Increased his fury and affright :  
     I tried my voice, — 't was faint and low,  
     But yet he swerved as from a blow ;  
     And, starting to each accent, sprang  
     As from a sudden trumpet's clang.  
 460 Meantime my cords were wet with gore,  
     Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er ;  
     And in my tongue the thirst became  
     A something fierier far than flame.

## XII.

“ We near'd the wild wood — 't was so wide,  
 465 I saw no bounds on either side ;

'T was studded with old sturdy trees,  
 That bent not to the roughest breeze  
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste  
 And strips the forest in its haste, —  
 470 But these were few and far between,  
 Set thick with shrubs more young and green,  
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,  
 Ere strown by those autumnal eves  
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,  
 475 Discolour'd with a lifeless red,  
 Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore  
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er,  
 And some long winter's night hath shed  
 Its frost o'er every tombless head,  
 480 So cold and stark the raven's beak  
 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek.  
 'T was a wild waste of underwood,  
 And here and there a chestnut stood,  
 The strong oak, and the hardy pine ;  
 485 But far apart — and well it were,  
 Or else a different lot were mine —  
     The boughs gave way, and did not tear  
     My limbs ; and I found strength to bear  
     My wounds already scarr'd with cold —  
 490 My bonds forbade to loose my hold.  
     We rustled through the leaves like wind,  
     Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind ;  
     By night I heard them on the track,  
     Their troop came hard upon our back,  
 495 With their long gallop which can tire  
     The hound's deep hate and hunter's fire :  
     Where'er we flew they follow'd on,  
     Nor left us with the morning sun ;  
     Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,

500 At day-break winding through the wood,  
 And through the night had heard their feet  
 Their stealing, rustling step repeat.  
 Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,  
 At least to die amidst the horde,  
 505 And perish—if it must be so—  
 At bay, destroying many a foe.  
 When first my courser's race begun,  
 I wish'd the goal already won;  
 But now I doubted strength and speed.  
 510 Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed  
 Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;  
 Nor faster falls the blinding snow  
 Which whelms the peasant near the door  
 Whose threshold he shall cross no more,  
 515 Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,  
 Than through the forest-paths he past—  
 Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;  
 All furious as a favour'd child  
 Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still—  
 520 A woman piqued—who has her will.

## XIII.

“The wood was past; 't was more than noon,  
 But chill the air although in June;  
 Or it might be my veins ran cold—  
 Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;  
 525 And I was then not what I seem,  
 But headlong as a wintry stream,  
 And wore my feelings out before  
 I well could count their causes o'er.  
 And what with fury, fear, and wrath,  
 530 The tortures which beset my path,  
 Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,

Thus bound in nature's nakedness,  
(Sprung from a race whose rising blood  
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,  
535 And trodden hard upon, is like  
The rattle-snake's in act to strike,)  
What marvel if this worn-out trunk  
Beneath its woes a moment sunk ?  
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,  
540 I seem'd to sink upon the ground ;  
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.  
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,  
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more :  
The skies spun like a mighty wheel ;  
545 I saw the trees like drunkards reel,  
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes.  
Which saw no farther : he who dies  
Can die no more than then I died.  
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,  
550 I felt the blackness come and go, . . .  
And strove to wake ; but could not make  
My senses climb up from below :  
I felt as on a plank at sea,  
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,  
555 At the same time upheave and whelm,  
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.  
My undulating life was as  
The fancied lights that flitting pass  
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when  
560 Fever begins upon the brain ;  
But soon it pass'd, with little pain,  
But a confusion worse than such :  
I own that I should deem it much,  
Dying, to feel the same again ;  
565 And yet I do suppose we must

Feel far more ere we turn to dust :  
No matter ; I have bared my brow  
Full in Death's face — before — and now.

## XIV.

“ My thoughts came back ; where was I ? Cold,  
570 And numb, and giddy : pulse by pulse  
Life reassumed its lingering hold,  
And throb by throb : till grown a pang  
Which for a moment would convulse,  
My blood reflow'd though thick and chill ;  
575 My ear with uncouth noises rang,  
My heart began once more to thrill ;  
My sight return'd, though dim, alas !  
And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.  
Methought the dash of waves was nigh :  
580 There was a gleam too of the sky,  
Studded with stars ; — it is no dream ;  
The wild horse swims the wilder stream !  
The bright broad river's gushing tide  
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,  
585 And we are half-way, struggling o'er  
To yon unknown and silent shore.  
The waters broke my hollow trance,  
And with a temporary strength  
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.  
590 My courser's broad breast proudly braves  
And dashes off the ascending waves,  
And onward we advance !  
We reach the slippery shore at length,  
A haven I but little prized,  
595 For all behind was dark and drear,  
And all before was night and fear.  
How many hours of night or day

In those suspended pangs I lay,  
 I could not tell ; I scarcely knew  
 600 If this were human breath I drew.

## XV.

“ With glossy skin, and dripping mane,  
     And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,  
     The wild steed’s sinewy nerves still strain  
         Up the repellent bank.  
 605 We gain the top : a boundless plain  
     Spreads through the shadow of the night,  
     And onward, onward, onward, seems,  
         Like precipices in our dreams,  
     To stretch beyond the sight ;  
 610 And here and there a speck of white,  
     Or scatter’d spot of dusky green,  
     In masses broke into the light,  
         As rose the moon upon my right.  
     But nought distinctly seen  
 615 In the dim waste would indicate  
     The omen of a cottage gate ;  
     No twinkling taper from afar  
         Stood like a hospitable star ;  
     Not even an ignis-fatuus rose  
 620 To make him merry with my woes :  
     That very cheat had cheer’d me then !  
     Although detected, welcome still,  
         Reminding me, through every ill,  
     Of the abodes of men.

## XVI.

625 “ Onward we went — but slack and slow ;  
     His savage force at length o’erspent,  
     The drooping courser, faint and low,  
         All feebly foaming went.

A sickly infant had had power  
 630 To guide him forward in that hour ;  
 But useless all to me.  
 His new-born tameness nought avail'd —  
 My limbs were bound ; my force had fail'd,  
 Perchance, had they been free.  
 635 With feeble effort still I tried  
 To rend the bonds so starkly tied —  
 But still it was in vain ;  
 My limbs were only wrung the more,  
 And soon the idle strife gave o'er,  
 640 Which but prolong'd their pain.  
 The dizzy race seem'd almost done,  
 Although no goal was nearly won :  
 Some streaks announced the coming sun —  
 How slow, alas ! he came !  
 645 Methought that mist of dawning gray  
 Would never dapple into day ;  
 How heavily it roll'd away —  
 Before the eastern flame  
 Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,  
 650 And call'd the radiance from their cars,  
 And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,  
 With lonely lustre, all his own.

## XVII.

“ Up rose the sun ; the mists were curl'd  
 Back from the solitary world  
 655 Which lay around — behind — before ;  
 What booted it to traverse o'er  
 Plain, forest, river ? Man nor brute,  
 Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,  
 Lay in the wild luxuriant soil ;  
 660 No sign of travel — none of toil ;

The very air was mute ;  
 And not an insect's shrill small horn,  
 Nor matin bird's new voice was borne  
 From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,  
 665 Panting as if his heart would burst,  
 The weary brute still stagger'd on ;  
 And still we were — or seem'd — alone.  
 At length, while reeling on our way,  
 Methought I heard a courser neigh  
 670 From out yon tuft of blackening firs.  
 Is it the wind those branches stirs ?  
 No, no ! from out the forest prance  
 A trampling troop ; I see them come !  
 In one vast squadron they advance !  
 675 I strove to cry — my lips were dumb.  
 The steeds rush on in plunging pride ;  
 But where are they the reins to guide ?  
 A thousand horse — and none to ride !  
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,  
 680 Wide nostrils — never stretch'd by pain,  
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,  
 And feet that iron never shod,  
 And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,  
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,  
 685 Like waves that follow o'er the sea,  
 Came thickly thundering on,  
 As if our faint approach to meet.  
 The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,  
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,  
 690 A moment, with a faint low neigh,  
 He answer'd, and then fell ;  
 With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,

664. A *werst* or *verst* is a Russian measure of length equivalent to about two thirds of a mile.

And reeking limbs immoveable;

His first and last career is done!

695 On came the troop — they saw him stoop,

They saw me strangely bound along

His back with many a bloody thong:

They stop — they start — they snuff the air,

Gallop a moment here and there,

700 Approach, retire, wheel round and round,

Then plunging back with sudden bound,

Headed by one black mighty steed

Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,

Without a single speck or hair

705 Of white upon his shaggy hide.

They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve aside,

And backward to the forest fly,

By instinct, from a human eye. —

They left me there to my despair,

710 Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,

Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,

Relieved from that unwonted weight,

From whence I could not extricate

Nor him nor me — and there we lay

715 The dying on the dead!

I little deem'd another day

Would see my houseless, helpless head.

“ And there from morn till twilight bound,

I felt the heavy hours toil round,

720 With just enough of life to see

My last of suns go down on me,

In hopeless certainty of mind,

That makes us feel at length resign'd

To that which our foreboding years

725 Presents the worst and last of fears

Inevitable — even a boon,  
 Nor more unkind for coming soon ; ,  
 Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,  
 As if it only were a snare

730 That prudence might escape :  
 At times both wish'd for and implored,  
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,  
 Yet still a dark and hideous close  
 To even intolerable woes,

735 And welcome in no shape.  
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,  
 They who have revell'd beyond measure  
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,  
 Die calm, or calmer oft than he

740 Whose heritage was misery :  
 For he who hath in turn run through  
 All that was beautiful and new,  
 Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave ;  
 And, save the future, (which is view'd

745 Not quite as men are base or good,  
 But as their nerves may be endued,) —  
 With nought perhaps to grieve : —

The wretch still hopes his woes must end,  
 And Death, whom he should deem his friend,  
 750 Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,  
 Arrived to rob him of his prize,  
 The tree of his new Paradise.

To-morrow would have given him all,  
 Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall ;

755 To-morrow would have been the first  
 Of days no more deplored or curst,  
 But bright, and long, and beckoning years,  
 Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,  
 Guerdon of many a painful hour ;

760 To-morrow would have given him power  
 To rule, to shine, to smite, to save —  
 And must it dawn upon his grave ?

## XVIII.

“ The sun was sinking — still I lay  
 Chain’d to the chill and stiffening steed ;  
 765 I thought to mingle there our clay ;  
 And my dim eyes of death had need,  
 No hope arose of being freed.  
 I cast my last looks up the sky,  
 And there between me and the sun  
 770 I saw the expecting raven fly,  
 Who scarce would wait till both should die  
 Ere his repast begun.  
 He flew, and perch’d, then flew once more,  
 And each time nearer than before ;  
 775 I saw his wing through twilight flit,  
 And once so near me he alit  
 I could have smote, but lack’d the strength ;  
 But the slight motion of my hand,  
 And feeble scratching of the sand,  
 780 The exerted throat’s faint struggling noise,  
 Which scarcely could be call’d a voice,  
 Together scared him off at length. —  
 I know no more — my latest dream  
 Is something of a lovely star  
 785 Which fix’d my dull eyes from afar,  
 And went and came with wandering beam,  
 And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense  
 Sensation of recurring sense,  
 And then subsiding back to death,  
 790 And then again a little breath,  
 A little thrill, a short suspense,  
 An icy sickness curdling o’er

My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—  
 A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,  
 195     A sigh, and nothing more.

## XIX.

“ I woke — Where was I ? — Do I see  
 A human face look down on me ?  
 And doth a roof above me close ?  
 Do these limbs on a couch repose ?  
 200 Is this a chamber where I lie ?  
 And is it mortal, yon bright eye  
 That watches me with gentle glance ?  
 I closed my own again once more,  
 As doubtful that the former trance  
 205     Could not as yet be o'er.  
 A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,  
 Sate watching by the cottage wall :  
 The sparkle of her eye I caught,  
 Even with my first return of thought ;  
 210 For ever and anon she threw  
 A prying, pitying glance on me  
 With her black eyes so wild and free.  
 I gazed, and gazed, until I knew  
 No vision it could be, —  
 215 But that I lived, and was released  
 From adding to the vulture's feast.  
 And when the Cossack maid beheld  
 My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,  
 She smiled — and I essay'd to speak,  
 220     But fail'd — and she approach'd, and made  
 With lip and finger signs that said,  
 I must not strive as yet to break  
 The silence, till my strength should be  
 Enough to leave my accents free ;

825 And then her hand on mine she laid,  
 And smooth'd the pillow for my head,  
 And stole along on tiptoe tread,  
     And gently oped the door, and spake  
     In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet!  
 830 Even music follow'd her light feet ; —  
     But those she call'd were not awake,  
     And she went forth ; but, ere she pass'd,  
     Another look on me she cast,  
     Another sign she made, to say,  
 835 That I had naught to fear, that all  
     Were near at my command or call,  
     And she would not delay  
     Her due return : — while she was gone,  
     Methought I felt too much alone.

## XX.

840 "She came with mother and with sire —  
     What need of more ? — I will not tire  
     With long recital of the rest,  
     Since I became the Cossack's guest.  
     They found me senseless on the plain —  
 845 They bore me to the nearest hut —  
     They brought me into life again —  
     Me — one day o'er their realm to reign !  
     Thus the vain fool who strove to glut  
     His rage, refining on my pain,  
 850 Sent me forth to the wilderness,  
     Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,  
     To pass the desert to a throne, —  
     What mortal his own doom may guess ? —  
     Let none despond, let none despair !  
 855 To-morrow the Borysthenes  
     May see our coursers graze at ease  
     Upon his Turkish bank, — and never

Had I such welcome for a river  
 As I shall yield when safely there.

860 Comrades, good night!" — The Hetman threw  
 His length beneath the oak-tree shade,  
 With leafy couch already made,  
 A bed nor comfortless nor new  
 To him who took his rest whene'er  
 865 The hour arrived, no matter where:  
 His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.  
 And if ye marvel Charles forgot  
 To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not, —  
 The king had been an hour asleep.

859. "Charles, having perceived that the day was lost, and that his only chance of safety was to retire with the utmost precipitation, suffered himself to be mounted on horseback, and with the remains of his army fled to a place called Perewolochna, situated in the angle formed by the junction of the Vorskla and the Borysthenes. Here, accompanied by Mazeppa and a few hundreds of his followers, Charles swam over the latter great river, and proceeding over a desolate country, in danger of perishing with hunger, at length reached the Bog, where he was kindly received by the Turkish pasha. The Russian envoy at the Sublime Porte demanded that Mazeppa should be delivered up to Peter, but the old Hetman of the Cossacks escaped this fate by taking a disease which hastened his death." BARROW: *Peter the Great*.

## NOTES, COMMENTS, AND SUGGESTIONS.

### CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

THE first and second cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* were apparently written without thought of publication — written rather as a sort of lyrical journal, free, open, and rapid.

With his friend Hobhouse he had, on July 2, 1809, sailed from Falmouth to Lisbon with the idea of spending a considerable time abroad. During the next two years he visited various cities in Portugal, Spain, Malta, Turkey, Greece, and other places in the Orient, returning to England in July of 1811. He brought with him a poem entitled *Hints from Horace*, which followed the satiric vein developed in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. This poem he showed with some pride to his kinsman, Mr. Robert Dallas, who candidly avowed that he considered it of little value, and was visibly disappointed that Byron had produced so little during the foreign sojourn. Questioned more closely, Byron said rather casually that he had written an account of his travels in Spenserian stanzas, but he thought the whole of little worth. Dallas read the two cantos, and was charmed by their style. He himself assumed the risk of publication, and they were soon brought out by Murray, the noted English publisher. All the world knows the story of that unprecedented success and the author's resulting popularity.

In his preface to the poem Byron expressly said that Childe Harold was a creature of imagination, and was not to be identified with any real person. The English public, nevertheless, immediately and persistently identified Childe Harold with Lord Byron; and when the poet wrote the third and fourth cantos, he saw the uselessness of longer keeping up the disguise, and accordingly spoke out more boldly in his own person.

*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, taken as a whole, is probably the most wonderful poem which travel has inspired. It maintains its interest, not because it describes in a splendid way the places which the poet visited, but because it portrays so intimately and so vividly the thoughts and the emotions which these scenes were able to arouse in a human soul which was responsive to such varied thought and emotion. We are not primarily interested in the scenes, but in the lyric reaction of those scenes.

### CANTO IV.

The third canto of *Childe Harold* was published in November, 1816. The fourth canto was begun June 26, 1817, finished in

September, 1817, and published in April, 1818, with a dedication to his friend Hobhouse. Both of these cantos show a distinct advance over the emotion and workmanship of Cantos I. and II. The poet had attained greater maturity, showed a firmer grasp, and a more striking individuality.

#### ANALYSIS OF CANTO IV.

The following analysis is taken from Dr. Rolfe's complete edition of *Childe Harold*. For the general plan and for most of the items Dr. Rolfe acknowledges his indebtedness to the French critic, Dr. Darmesteter.

#### CANTO IV: ITALY.

- I.-XVIII. Venice.
- XIX.-XXIV. Imagination and Memory.
- XXV., XXVI. The Beauty of Italy even in Ruins.
- XXVII—XXIX. An Italian Sunset.
- XXX.—XXXIV. Arqua and Petrarch.
- XXXV.—XXXIX. Ferrara and Tasso.
- XL., XLI. Ariosto.
- XLII., XLIII. Apostrophe to Italy (Filicaja's Sonnet).
- XLIV.—XLVII. Sulpicius and the Downfall of Rome.
- XLVIII. Florence.
- XLIX.—LIII. The Venus de' Medici.
- LIV.—LVI. Santa Croce and its Dead.
- LVII.—LIX. Dante and Boccaccio.
- LX. The Tombs of the Medici and the Graves of the Poets.
- LXI. Art and Nature.
- LXII.—LXV. Lake Thrasimene.
- LXVI.—LXVIII. Clitumnus and its Temple.
- LXIX.—LXXII. The Fall of Terni.
- LXXIII.—LXXVII. The Apennines; Soracte and Horace.
- LXXVIII.—LXXXII. Rome and her Ruins.
- LXXXIII.—LXXXVI. Sylla and Cromwell.
- LXXXVII. The Statue of Pompey.
- LXXXVIII. The Wolf of the Capitol.
- LXXXIX.—XCII. Caesar and Napoleon.
- XCIII.—XCVII. The Reaction of 1815.
- XCVIII. The Coming Triumph of Freedom.
- XCIX.—CV. The Tomb of Cæcilia Metella.
- CVI.—CIX. The Ruins of the Palatine Hill.
- CX., CXI. The Columns of Phocas and of Trajan.
- CXII.—CXIV. The Capitol; the Forum; Rienzi.
- CXV.—CXIX. Egeria and her Fountain.
- CXX.—CXXVII. Love; its Ideals and its Realities.
- CXXVIII.—CXLV. The Coliseum; Byron's Imprecation and Forgiveness of his Enemies; The Dying Gladiator.

CXLVI., CXLVII. The Pantheon.

CXLVIII.-CLI. The Legend of the Roman Daughter.

CLII. The Mausoleum of Hadrian.

CLIII.-CLIX. St. Peter's.

CLX. The Laocoön.

CLXI.-CLXIII. The Apollo Belvedere.

CLXIV.-CLXVI. Childe Harold recalled.

CLXVII.-CLXXII. The Death of the Princess Charlotte.

CLXXIII.-CLXXVI. Lakes Nemi and Albano; the view from the Alban Mount.

CLXXVII.-CLXXXIV. Apostrophe to the Ocean.

CLXXXV., CLXXXVI. The End of the Song and the Poet's Farewell.

**1. I stood in Venice.** Byron at this time was living at Venice, going and returning frequently. His *Ode on Venice*, *Beppo*, *Marino Faliero*, and *The Two Foscari* also show his interest in this ancient and famous city.

**2. A palace and a prison on each hand.** The *palace* is the Ducal Palace and the *prison* the State Prison.

**7.** The height of her power as a republic was attained by Venice in the 15th century, when she held various possessions in Dalmatia, Greece, and the Levant. Napoleon put an end to the republic in 1797. Read Wordsworth's sonnet *On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic*.

**8.** The lion of St. Mark is the emblem of Venice.

**10. She looks a sea Cybele.** Cybele, the wife of Chronos and the mother of the Olympian gods, was usually represented as enthroned between two lions. Her head is adorned with a mural crown.

Is the metaphor an effective one? Does it make you feel that you have Byron's conception of the appearance of Venice?

**17. What significance lies in the word purple?**

**19. Tasso's echoes are no more.** "The well-known song of the gondoliers, of alternate stanzas from Tasso's *Jerusalem*, has died with the independence of Venice." — *Hobhouse*. Torquato Tasso (1544-95), next to Dante among the epic poets of Italy, published his *Jerusalem Delivered* in its final form in 1581.

**24. States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth not die.** With this compare Matthew Arnold's expression in *The Youth of Nature*. Nature speaking says: —

Race after race, man after man,  
Have thought that my secret was theirs,  
Have dream'd that I lived but for them,  
That they were my glory and joy.  
— They are dust, they are changed, they are gone!  
I remain.

**30. despond.** Supply a synonym.

**31. dogeless.** When Venice was conquered by Napoleon in 1797 the office of the *doge* was abolished.

**33. Rialto.** This is the name of a famous bridge which spans the Grand Canal. Near the bridge was the Merchants' Exchange, made famous by Shakespeare.

**33, 34.** For **Shylock**, the **Moor**, and **Pierre**, see respectively *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, and Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserved*.

**35.** Explain the symbolisms in the **keystones of the arch**. Paraphrase the last two lines of the stanza.

**37-46.** What stanzas in Wordsworth's *I wandered lonely as a cloud* express a similar thought? Phrase in prose the thought of the stanza. Illustrate by an imaginary specific example the idea in the latter half of the stanza.

**37. beings of the mind.** Any concepts stored in the brain, — characters in literature, memories of past experiences, etc.

**42. these spirits.** What spirits?

**45. void.** Comment on the rhyme.

**46-54.** In what sense is the idea here converse to that of stanza V.?

**46, 47.** Explain these two lines.

**53. constellations.** Explain the grammatical structure.

**57. are now but so.** Are now but dreams.

**64.** Byron spoke Italian fluently; he was less skilled in French, German, Latin, and Greek.

**70. and should I leave behind**, etc. And even though I leave England behind, perhaps I loved it well. Byron was somewhat variable in his attitude toward his native country. The remembrance of the treatment he received at the hands of the British public rankled. This passage is, however, genuinely patriotic.

**73.** Cf. what Byron wrote to Murray, June 7, 1819: "I trust they won't think of 'picking and bringing me home to Clod or Blunderbuss Hall.' I am sure my bones would not rest in an English grave, or my clay mix with the earth of that country. I believe the thought would drive me mad on my deathbed, could I suppose that any of my friends would be base enough to convey my carcass back to your soil. I would not even feed your worms, if I could help it." — Quoted by Rolfe.

Tennyson in *In Memoriam* (XVIII.) found comfort in thinking of the body of Arthur Hallam being laid in English soil:

'T is well; 't is something; we may stand  
Where he in English earth is laid,  
And from his ashes may be made  
The violet of his native land.

**78. fond.** This word is used in its Elizabethan sense of *foolish*.

**82. temple.** What abbey is this?

**85. Spartan's epitaph.** This, Hobhouse tells us, was the answer made by the mother of Brasidas, the Lacedæmonian general, to those who praised the memory of her son.

**87. nor need.** Supply the ellipsis. This line is Byronic bravado.

**91. spouseless Adriatic,** etc. In former times the Doge annually went out in his barge **Bucentaur**, and ceremoniously threw a ring into the sea in token of the city's maritime supremacy.

**95. St. Mark.** St. Mark is the patron saint of Venice, and the lion is his emblem. Napoleon ordered this lion taken from its pedestal in the Piazzetta, and sent it to Paris, but it was later restored.

**97, 98. The proud Place** was in front of the Cathedral. Here Emperor Frederic Barbarossa (called the Suabian in stanza XII.) in 1177 opposed the papacy, but was soon forced to yield to Pope Alexander III.

**100. Austrian.** Napoleon conquered Venice in 1805; in 1814 it was restored to Austria, under whose dominion it remained until 1866.

**106. lauwine.** A German word meaning *avalanche*.

**107. Oh, for one hour of blind old Dandolo!** “The reader will recollect the exclamation of the Highlander, ‘O, for one hour of Dundee!’ Henry Dandolo, when elected Doge in 1192, was eighty-five years of age. When he commanded the Venetians at the taking of Constantinople, he was consequently ninety-seven years of age.”—*Hobhouse*.

**109. steeds of brass.** These are above the portal of the church of St. Mark.

**111. The Venetians** in 1379 were overcome by the Genoese and the prince of Padua. In surrendering they sent an embassy to the conquerors in which they promised to agree to any terms which allowed them their independence. The Genoese, through their commander, Peter Doria, sent back the answer, “On God’s faith, gentlemen of Venice, ye shall have no peace . . . until we have first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours, that are upon the porch of your evangelist St. Mark.”

**113. thirteen hundred years of freedom.** Venice was founded in 452. As Byron wrote this in 1817, the exact number of years that had elapsed since the founding was thirteen hundred sixty-five. Cf. *The Ode to Venice*—

Thirteen hundred years  
Of wealth and glory turned to dust.

**114-117. Sinks, like a sea-weed.** Rolfe and other critics see in this an allusion to the gradual subsidence of Venetian buildings. The notes written by Hobhouse, and published by Byron with the poem, suggest rather the deterioration of patriotic spirit. This certainly is more in keeping with the temperament of Byron.

**118. a new Tyre.** The old Tyre, as described by the prophet Ezekiel, was a Phenician city of great magnificence and

splendor. Like Venice, it was built upon islands. Cf. Ezekiel, chapters xxvi-xxviii. Cf. also Isaiah xxiii : 8.

**119. by-word.** Nickname.

**120. The 'Planter of the Lion.'** The Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the Republic of Venice.

**123. bulwark.** Explain the grammatical construction.

Ottomite = Ottoman Turks.

**124. Troy's rival, Candia.** Rival in point of time spent in its defence. The Trojans defended their city ten years; the Venetians defended Candia (on the coast of Crete) for twenty-four years.

**125. Lepanto's fight.** In the Gulf of Lepanto the Venetians and their allies defeated the Turks in a great naval battle in 1571.

**127-135.** Note Byron's splendid choice of details in this stanza. What is the total effect of these?

**129. pile.** Ducal Palace.

**136. When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse.** In 414 B. C. the Athenians under Nicias laid siege to Syracuse, but were in 413 B. C. forced to yield. Some of the Athenian captives are said by Plutarch to have obtained their freedom by reciting passages from Euripides. Browning makes use of this legend in his *Balaustion's Adventure*. Balaustion, a young girl of Rhodes, was one of a group of Athenian sympathizers who were captured by the Syracusans. These captors, finding that Balaustion was willing to recite the *Alcestis* of Euripides on condition that she and her friends be released, listened in charmed attention to her story. "All this came," said Balaustion, as she retold her adventure, "from the

glory of the golden verse,  
And passion of the picture, and that fine  
Frank outgush of the human gratitude  
Which saved our ship and me, in Syracuse—  
Ay, and the tear or two which slipt perhaps  
Away from you, friends, while I told my tale,  
— It all came of this play."

**140-145.** What creates the vividness of these lines? Is it due to the choice of verbs? Has the use of the present tense any vivifying effect?

**151-153. Albion.** England. Rolfe quotes the description of England in *Richard II.*, II. 1. 46.

This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands.

Of course it is not necessary to assume that Byron was thinking of Shakespeare's passage.

**158.** Otway's *Venice Preserved*, Mrs. Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Schiller's *Ghost-seer* (*Der Geisterseher*), and Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* are here referred to.

**160.** Interpret the *thus*.

**161.** Supply the ellipsis.

**163-171.** Byron is by no means the only writer in English who has been influenced by Venice. Can you cite others?

**172. But.** Can you justify Byron's use of *but* here?

**tannen.** German word for *fir trees*. " *Tannen* is the plural of *tanne*, a species of fir peculiar to the Alps, which only thrives in very rocky parts, where scarcely soil sufficient for its nourishment can be found. On these spots it grows to a greater height than any other mountain tree." — *Byron*.

**Stanzas XX.-XXV.** Frame in five single sentences the thought in each of these five stanzas. With what idea or ideas expressed in these stanzas do you disagree? Do you know of other writers who have expressed similar thoughts?

**189.** What is the antecedent of *it*?

**194. weave their web again.** Recomence their work.

**199-201.** Illustrate the thought of this stanza by a specific example — real or imaginary. E. H. Coleridge calls attention here to Browning's *Bishop Blougram's Apology*.

Just when we are safest, there 's a sunset-touch,  
A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,  
A chorus-ending from Euripides, —  
And that 's enough for fifty hopes and fears  
To rap and knock and enter in our soul.

**216. Too many! — yet how few!** Why *too* many? Why *how few*?

**217 ff.** Note how Byron here brings the reader back from these digressive stanzas on abstract themes to the concrete realities in Rome. The poet's thoughts now turn from Venice to other Italian cities.

**218.** Why does Byron speak of himself as a *ruin*?

**220-224.** Does Byron's praise of Italy here seem to you extravagant, or do facts justify it?

**226. commonwealth of kings.** A republic of kingly citizens.

**230-234.** Note the reserve power felt in these lines. The poet selects for eulogy the meander things in Italy. What praise could he not bestow upon the grander?

**Stanzas XXVII.-XXX.** These three stanzas are full of what we term *sensory images*, — *i. e.*, images that appeal to such senses as sight, hearing, feeling, taste, and smell. The student will note that here the appeal is principally to the eye; color, form, and movement are most prominent in the reader's conception. Try to picture all this by studying carefully each mentioned detail and formulating it all in a successive chain of images. Naturally we cannot reconstruct the particular image Byron had in mind, but we can call up pictures which will generate similar emotions. Unless we can do this we are unable to read poetry. What images, other than sight images, are here conceived?

235. Byron conceives himself as stationed on the mainland opposite Venice, where the river Brenta flows into the Gulf of Venice.

238. **blue Friuli's mountains.** The mountains meant are "the Julian Alps, which form an arc from behind Trieste to the neighbourhood of Verona; and the word must be taken in its widest acceptation, for the mountains intended are evidently those to the west of Venice, while Friuli itself (the ancient Forum Julii) is to the north-east of that city." The same chain, or higher summits beyond, are called below "the far Rhætian hill," that is, the Tyrolese heights. — *Tozer.*

243. **an island of the blest.** "The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an Oriental or an Italian sky, yet it is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening as contemplated in one of many rides along the bank of the Brenta, near La Mira." — *Byron.*

**Stanza XXIX.** In the suggestion of images, what power does literature have that is denied to painting and to sculpture? Illustrate from this stanza. Students should consult Lessing's *Laocoön*.

254. **hues.** What case?

259. **Dies like the dolphin.** Is Byron's description true to science? What is your authority?

**Stanza XXX.** From here to stanza XLVII. Byron's ideas are largely aroused by Italian literature, and the life-story of some of her poets.

262. **Arqua.** Consult an atlas or a gazetteer.

reared in air. The tomb of Petrarch is supported on red marble pillars.

264. **Laura's lover.** Petrarch. Consult the encyclopedia.

267-269. What language did he *raise*? What land *reclaim*? Who were his *barbaric foes*?

269. **Watering the tree.** In his poetry Petrarch makes frequent mention of the *laurel*. He plays upon the resemblance between this and the Laura who inspired his lyrics.

271 ff. Tozer appositely quotes Milton's *Epitaph on Shakespeare*.

What needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones  
The labour of an age in piled stones?  
Or that his hallow'd relics should be hid  
Under a star-y pointing pyramid?

What great men do you know about whose monuments are *plain and simple*? For Byron's view consult the note on line 478.

**Stanzas XXXII-XXXV.** Do you agree with Byron in his notion that solitude, because it has no flatterers, better enables an individual to work out his own particular soul-problems? Or is it better to talk them over with those who are wiser than we? Or will varying conditions dictate a choice between these two

alternatives? Perhaps you can suggest other and better methods. How does literature sometimes offer us aid? Do you agree with Byron's note in which he says, "The struggle is full as likely to be with demons as with our better thoughts. Satan chose the wilderness for the temptation of our Saviour. And our unsullied John Locke preferred the presence of a child to complete solitude."

**280-288.** Can you cite other examples of great writers who lived in quiet hamlets?

**282.** Phrase this line in simpler language.

**290. where-by.** On the banks of which.

**293. Idlesse.** How do you account for this form?

**293. Hath its morality.** Meaning?

**298-306.** Byron here suggests that some individuals are so unfortunate as to believe themselves predestined to a doom which will not pass away. These individuals lack the element that has distinguished the best and noblest poetry of such writers as Tennyson and Browning — our greatest modern teachers.

**307.** Byron, on his way to Florence, stopped at Ferrara, which in the 15th and 16th centuries was a noted center of art and literature. Browning has immortalized it under the title of his poem *My Last Duchess*.

**308. Whose symmetry was not for solitude.** Meaning?

**311. Este:** The name of the house which long ruled Ferrara. The glories of the house were celebrated in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*.

**314.** Alfonso I., who belonged to the house of Este, was a patron of poets — particularly of Ariosto.

Alfonso II. for a time was Tasso's patron. It is popularly believed that this duke, because of Tasso's political intrigues, and because of his daring to love the duke's sister, had the poet confined as a lunatic in a narrow cell. (Cf. Byron's *Lament of Tasso* and Goethe's *Torquato Tasso*). But later authorities assert that this confinement was due to the genuine insanity of the poet, and Byron's attack here may not be quite justifiable.

**332, 333.** For the thought in these last two lines cf. Shakespeare's *King Lear*, IV. vi. 163 ff.

a dog 's obey'd in office. . . .

The usurer hangs the cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes great vices do appear;  
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,  
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;  
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.

**335. beasts that perish.** Ps. xlix: 20.

**339. the Cruscan quire.** "The Accademia della Crusca, established at Florence in 1582, with the object of purifying the national language. It censured Tasso's *Jerusalem*. *Quire* is now commonly spelled *choir*." — Rolfe.

**340. Boileau.** "The celebrated French critic, who complained that the taste of his time preferred the tinsel of Tasso to the gold of Virgil." — *Rolfe*.

**342. monotony in wire.** Boileau in France was as devoted to the heroic couplet as was Pope in England. Lowell has aptly termed this measure the *rocking-horse meter*.

**354. Bards of Hell and Chivalry.** Dante wrote of hell (the *Inferno*), and Ariosto wrote of chivalry.

**355. Tuscan father.** Dante.

**356, 357. the Florentine, The southern Scott.** Ariosto. Scott and Byron were admirers of each other's work. Scott abandoned narrative poetry because he felt that Byron was excelling him.

**361. The lightning, etc.** "Before the remains of Tasso were removed from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust, which surmounted the tomb, was struck by lightning, and a crown of laurels melted away." — *Hobhouse*.

**364. true laurel-wreath.** What is the true laurel-wreath?

**368.** Among the Romans it was a superstition that the lightning sanctified the objects it struck. Because of this belief the Curtian lake and the Ruminal fig-tree in the Forum were held sacred.

**370-378.** Byron tells us that this stanza and the next are a free translation of Filiceja's famous sonnet.

**377. robbers.** Whom did Byron probably have in mind?

**387-395.** In his celebrated letter to Cicero Servius Sulpicius tries to console the great orator for the death of Cicero's daughter Tullia. He contrasts the insignificance of an individual death with the tragic significance of the downfall of a state. Parts of the letter describe a route by sea and land which Byron often traced. "On my return from Asia," writes Byron, "as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara, I began to contemplate the prospects of the countries around me: Ægina was behind, Megara before me; Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left; all which towns once famous and flourishing, now lie overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight, I could not but think presently within myself: Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcasses of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view."

**399.** Note the cacophony (disagreeable sound) in this line. Byron, in his hurry, is sometimes careless of his style and syntax.

**404. surviving page.** What page?

**409. And I in desolation.** Supply the ellipsis.

**415-423.** Byron's tribute to Italy is comprehensive; Italy has been the mother of arts, war, and religion. Byron might also have mentioned law — perhaps the most significant of Roman contributions to present civilization.

422-423. Has the prophecy of these lines been fulfilled ?

425. **Etrurian Athens.** Florence. Tuscany, of which Florence, on the Arno, is the capital, was formerly called Etruria. Florence is the modern home of art, as Athens was the ancient home.

431. **modern Luxury.** "The refined luxury of modern days, as distinguished from the barbarous splendor of the Middle Ages, was first seen at Florence, especially at the court of the Medici : it was the result of the great wealth of Florentine Traders." — *Tozer.*

432. **buried Learning.** Florence was one of the centers of the Renaissance movement.

433. The **Goddess** alluded to is the statue of Venus de' Medici in the Tribune of the Uffizi Gallery. The method of description which Byron here adopts is *description by effect*. You will note that he says almost nothing about the objective characteristics of the statue; the sense of beauty is, however, powerfully revealed to the reader through the poet's magnificent enthusiasm. This sort of reaction is characteristic of the entire poem. For a similar effect produced by other Florentine objects, read Henry James's *The Madonna of the Future*.

445. **Chained to the chariot.** To what ancient Roman custom does Byron here allude ?

448. **paltry jargon of the marble mart.** Technical descriptions of art treasures used by those dealers who are deluding purchasers.

450. The **Dardan Shepherd** is Paris, who decided the contest of beauty between Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite (Venus).

452. **more deeply blest.** Because Anchises was privileged to marry Aphrodite (Venus).

454. **Lord of War.** Who is meant ?

458. **lava** combines the two ideas suggested in *melting* and *burning*. The image is certainly not of Byron's happiest conception.

460-468. Phrase in a single sentence the thought of this stanza.

470. **ape.** Copier.

478. **Santa Croce.** "The church of Santa Croce contains much illustrious nothing. The tombs of Machiavelli, Michael Angelo, Galileo, and Alfieri, make it the Westminster Abbey of Italy. I did not admire any of these tombs — beyond their contents. . . . What is necessary but a bust and name ? and perhaps a date. . . . All your allegory and eulogy is infernal." — *Byron's Letters*, 1817. For what is each of these four great men especially noted ?

487. **like the elements.** The ancients believed that all creation was composed of the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water.

**495. Canova**, the famous Italian sculptor, died in 1822, two years before Byron's death.

**496, 497.** For what are Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio (the bard of prose) especially noted?

**505. Dante sleeps afar.** Dante is buried in Ravenna, near the "upbraiding shore" of the Adriatic.

**506.** Scipio Africanus the Elder is supposed to be buried near the sea at Liturnum in Campania. He gave orders that he must not be buried at Rome, but at Liturnum, where he had spent several years of voluntary exile. Upon his tomb, some histories assert, there was inscribed in Latin, "Ungrateful country, you shall not have my ashes."

**507. Thy factions.** This alludes to the long strife between the Guelf and the Ghibelline parties. One of the results of this strife was the banishment of Dante.

**510, 511. and the crown, etc.** Byron's diction here is careless; he evidently means that upon a far and foreign soil (France) Petrarch had done the work which finally won for him the laurel crown at Rome — a crown which he wore with rare dignity. His grave at Arqua was rifled by Florentine robbers.

**514. to his parent earth.** Boccaccio was buried at his birth-place, Certaldo (south-west of Florence). Later his remains were ejected from the sacred precincts by those whom Byron calls "hyæna bigots."

**517. Tuscan's siren tongue.** The Italian is the most mellifluous of languages.

**522. whom.** Boccaccio, whom the monks hated.

**525. the Cæsar's pageant.** Because Brutus was one of the conspirators against Julius Cæsar, his bust was not carried in the funeral procession of Tiberius Cæsar. Or, perhaps, as some authorities say, the funeral procession alluded to is that of Junia, wife of Cassius, and sister of Brutus.

**528. Fortress of falling empire.** During the barbarian invasions Ravenna was one of the more strongly fortified places of the Empire.

**532.** Byron is here referring to the expensive tombs of the Medici in the church of San Lorenzo at Florence. Notice the effect of this on the poet as he expresses it in a letter to Murray: "I also went to the Medici chapel, — fine frippery in great slabs of various expensive stones, to commemorate fifty rotten and forgotten carcasses." He was so much disgusted with the ostentatious magnificence of the chapel that he did not notice Michael Angelo's celebrated statues on the tombs.

**542. Arno's dome of Art.** Mr. E. H. Coleridge thinks this refers to the Duomo or Cathedral at Florence. Other editors think the poet is referring to the Uffizi Gallery.

**543. rainbow sister.** Explain.

**545-549.** Cf. the thought here with that expressed in one of

Byron's letters to Murray: "I never yet saw the picture or the statue which came a league within my conception or expectation; but I have seen many mountains, and seas, and rivers, and views . . . [that] went far beyond it."

**551. Thrasimene's lake.** Here Hannibal, through his artful wiles, was able to entrap and defeat the Roman army.

**554-559.** Study the method by which Byron here secures his effect of vividness. Is he apt in his selection of details? of words? Illustrate.

**563. An earthquake reeled unheededly away.** Livy is Byron's authority; he says that the carnage here was so intense that the fighters were unconscious of the great earthquake then occurring.

**577.** Note that Byron here effects his transition by means of contrast.

**585. unwilling waters.** Why unwilling?

**586. But thou, Clitumnus.** "No book of travels has omitted to expatiate on the temple of the Clitumnus, between Foligno and Spoleto; and no sight, or scenery, even in Italy, is more worthy a description." — *Byron*.

**590. milk-white steer.** Byron follows Virgil. Cf. *Georgics*, ii. 146, "Hinc, albi, Clitumne, greges." Cf. also Macaulay's *Horatius*: —

Unwatched along Clitumnus  
Grazes the milk-white steer.

Pliny tells us that the waters of certain rivers were supposed to make the cattle which drank from them white.

**602. chance.** Perchance.

**scattered.** Spread out.

**604-612.** This stanza suggests an attitude toward nature frequent in Byron; he seems to look on nature as a retreat from the weariness of the world, rather than as an active agency in healing power.

**612. disgust.** E. H. Coleridge defines the particular meaning here as *tastelessness*.

**613-621.** Note here the various sensory images. Which ones appeal to the eye? which to the ear? Recreate each separate image.

**614.** The name of the cataract is Terni. It is formed by the Velino River.

**620. Phlegethon.** The name of one of the four rivers in Hades. Tozer calls attention to the fine way in which the idea of spirits in torment is here carried out.

**629. Crushing the cliffs, etc.** No poet has a keener eye for the powerful, the tempestuous, in nature. Note this characteristic in the following stanza, and throughout the poem.

**640-648.** Make a study of the similes in this stanza.

**642. Iris.** Meaning?

653. *lauwine*. Avalanches. Byron's German is faulty, the correct plural being *Lauwinen*.

654. *Jungfrau*. Literally, *virgin* mountain. This peak of the Alps, which Byron here speaks of as *never-trodden*, had a peculiar fascination for the poet. He makes it the scene of much of the action of *Manfred*.

657. *Chimari*. The Acroceraunian Mountains, now called the Chimari, take their present name from the town which lies near.

658. *Acroceraunian* is Greek for *thunder-hills* above, — literally, *peaks struck by lightning* or thunder. Cf. Shelley's *Arethusa* : —

Arethusa arose  
From her couch of snows  
In the Acroceraunian mountains.

659. Supply the ellipsis.

662. *with a Trojan's eye*. From the plain of Troy.

663. *Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas*. Consult an atlas or a gazetteer.

665. *Soracte's height*. "This mountain (now known as *San Oreste*), to the north of Rome, though only 2260 feet high, is a conspicuous object in the view from many points in the city, on account of its isolated position. Its broken contour, as it rises 'from out the plain' (we have in mind particularly the view from San Pietro di Montorio — the ancient Janiculum), at once recalls the poet's comparison to a breaking wave. Virgil refers to Soracte in the *Æn.* vi. 696 : 'Hi Soractis habent arces;' and *id.* xi. 785 : 'Summe deum, sancti custos Soractis Apollo;' and Horace, in *Od.* i. 9 : 'Vides ut alta stet nive candidum Soracte.' It is this last passage that Byron had in mind in saying that the height is 'not now in snow.' The temple of Apollo on the summit, to which Virgil alludes, is replaced by the modern church of San Silvestro." — *Rolfe*.

666. *lyric Roman*. Horace. See note above.

668, 669. *Heaves like a long-swept wave*, etc. Cf. this with Matthew Arnold's notable simile in *Sohrab and Rustum* : —

For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,  
Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,  
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall,  
And whether it will heave us up to land,  
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,  
Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,  
We know not, and no search will make us know;  
Only the event will teach us in its hour.

672. *I abhorred*, etc. Byron's temperament did not easily accord with the routine of classical studies as pursued at Harrow and at Cambridge. In a letter to Moore he expresses his opinion of Virgil: "I shall go to Bologna by Ferrara, instead of Mantua; because I would rather see the cell where they caged Tasso . . . than his own MSS. at Modena, or the Mantuan birthplace of that harmonious plagiary and miserable flatterer whose cursed

hexameters were drilled into me at Harrow." Byron's own note follows: "I wish to express that we become tired of the task before we can comprehend the beauty; that we learn by rote before we can get by heart; that the freshness is worn away, and the future pleasure and advantage deadened and destroyed, by the didactic anticipation, at an age when we can neither feel nor understand the power of compositions which it requires an acquaintance with life, as well as Latin and Greek, to relish or to reason upon. . . . In some parts of the Continent young persons are taught from more common authors, and do not read the best classics till their maturity."

690. nor Bard prescribe his art. The reference is to Horace's *Ars Poetica* in which the poet lays down his conception of the laws of poetry. Pope's *Essay on Criticism* was influenced by Horace's *Ars Poetica*.

695. must turn to thee. What consolation does Rome offer to those who are destitute of love and sympathy?

703. Niobe of nations. What comparison is there between Niobe and Rome? Consult a classical dictionary.

707. Scipios' tomb. This tomb, discovered near the Appian Way in 1780, was soon rifled of its bones.

715. steep. The road up the Capitoline Hill which triumphal processions took.

723. we but feel our way to err. Groping our way, we make mistakes.

734. Tully's. Cicero's.

735, 736. these shall be, etc. In the pages of these, future ages will read Rome's story.

740-744. Triumphant Sylla. Sulla (or Sylla) was given the name *Felix* to characterize his continued good luck. He set out for the Mithridatic war 87 B. C. before he had gained the results of the victory over Marius.

745. Annihilated senates. Sulla was appointed Dictator in 81 B. C. After this the Senate was completely in his power.

746. thou didst lay down, etc. Sulla gave up his "dictatorial wreath" in 79 B. C., and withdrew into private life.

752. Eternal. Cf. Hall Caine's novel *The Eternal City*.

758. Cromwell dissolved the Long Parliament and brought Charles I. to the block.

763. His fate. "On the 3d of September Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar [1650]; a year afterwards he obtained 'his crowning mercy' of Worcester [1651]; and a few years after [1658], on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died." — *Byron*.

775. dread statue. The statue of Pompey is still existent in the Spada Palace at Rome. Tradition has long accepted this as the one at whose feet Cæsar fell. Cf. Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*, III. ii. 192-193.

**781. Nemesis.** Byron here asks the god of vengeance if Cæsar's death by Brutus came as a retribution for Pompey's death by Cæsar.

**784. thunder-stricken nurse of Rome.** The bronze "Wolf of the Capitol" in the Palace of the Conservators is thought to be the one alluded to by Cicero in his third oration against Catiline.

**799. supremacy.** What is the grammatical construction?

**800. one vain man.** Napoleon. Byron has fully characterized Napoleon in the following stanzas taken from Canto III. of *Childe Harold*.

XXXVI.

There<sup>1</sup> sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,  
Whose spirit, antithetically mixed,  
One moment of the mightiest, and again  
On little objects with like firmness fixed,  
Extreme in all things ! hadst thou been betwixt,  
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been,  
For daring made thy rise as fall; thou seek'st  
Even now to reassume the imperial mien  
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene !

XXXVII.

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou !  
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name  
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now  
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,  
Who wooed thee once, thy vassal, and became  
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert  
A god unto thyself; nor less the same  
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,  
Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

XXXVIII.

O, more or less than man — in high or low,  
Battling with nations, flying from the field ;  
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now  
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield ;  
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,  
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,  
However deeply in men's spirits skilled,  
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,  
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star !

XXXIX.

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning tide  
With that untaught innate philosophy,  
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,  
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.  
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,  
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled  
With a sedate and all-enduring eye ; —  
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favorite child,  
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him piled.

XL.

Sager than in thy fortunes ; for in them  
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show  
That just habitual scorn which could contemn  
Men and their thoughts ; 't was wise to feel, not so

<sup>1</sup> Waterloo.

To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,  
 And spurn the instruments thou wert to use  
 Till they were turned unto thine overthrow :  
 'T is but a worthless world to win or lose ;  
 So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

## XLI.

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,  
 Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,  
 Such scorn of man had helped to brave the shock ;  
 But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,  
 Their admiration thy best weapon shone :  
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not then —  
 Unless aside thy purple had been thrown —  
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men ;  
 For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

**801. vanquished by himself.** Napoleon was at this time an exile on St. Helena.

**803. bastard Cæsar.** An inferior Cæsar.

**809, 810. Alcides with the distaff.** An allusion to Hercules who, dressed in maiden's garb, spun wool for Omphale, queen of Lydia. Cæsar was fascinated by Cleopatra.

**811. And came — and saw — and conquered !** The translation of Caesar's famous sentence — *veni, vidi, vici* — in which he describes the result of his campaign against Pharnaces II., King of Pontus.

**812. his eagles.** Here symbolically used for French soldiery, which were trained to "flee" toward, not away from, the enemy.

**828.** Cf. Gen. ix: 13.

**Stanzas XCIII., XCIV.** Try to put the thought of these two stanzas into one compact sentence. Do you agree with Byron? Can you think of any literary selection that voices a similar thought? Is Byron most interesting — or least so — when he gives expression to such abstract views of life? Or do you like better the objective descriptions in his travels?

**850-854. The yoke that is upon us, etc.** The reference is to the increased absolutism in government which followed the fall of Napoleon.

**853. apes of him.** The antecedent of *him* is Napoleon.

**859. Pallas.** Consult a classical dictionary. The comparison of America's springing to full liberty as Pallas sprang to full maturity is a striking simile.

**863. Washington.** Cf. Byron's *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte* for another reference to Washington.

**866. The Saturnalia** was a Roman festival marked by unrestrained license.

**871. the base pageant.** "By the 'base pageant' Byron refers to the Congress of Vienna (September, 1815); the Holy Alliance (September 26) into which the Duke of Wellington would not enter; and the Second Treaty of Paris, November 20, 1815." — *E. H. Coleridge.*

**Stanza XCVIII.** Get clearly in mind each separate figure

which Byron uses in his analysis of freedom. Do you find his rapid formation of figures producing a clarifying or a confusing effect?

881. **in the bosom of the North.** Byron is probably thinking of England.

883. **stern round tower.** This tower — the tomb of Cæcilia Metella — is situated on the Appian Way, two miles from Rome. It is sixty-five feet in diameter.

904. **Cornelia.** We remember her for her famous characterization of her sons, the Gracchi — “These are my jewels.”

905. **Egypt's graceful queen.** Cleopatra.

906. **it.** What is the antecedent?

**Stanza CIII. The wealthiest Roman's wife.** There has been abundant conjecture about the personality of Cæcilia Metella, but we know only that she was the wife of Crassus.

969. **Hath but one page.** History simply repeats itself.

976. **in this span.** Here in the narrow territory about the Palatine Hill once reigned the greatest of civilizations, but now the foundation can scarcely be traced.

983. **nameless column.** Antiquarians have discovered that this column was erected in honor of the Emperor Phocas, A. D. 608.

989. **apostolic statues.** A statue of St. Peter is now upon the column of Trajan and a statue of St. Paul upon the column of Aurelius.

990. **whose ashes slept sublime, Buried in air.** There was a legend that Trajan's ashes were placed in a gilded globe which originally surmounted the column of Trajan. When Sixtus V. opened this globe, he found it empty.

997. **Alexander,** under the influence of wine, killed his friend Clitus.

999. **still.** *Even to this age rather than nevertheless.*

1000. **rock of Triumph.** This marked the spot on the Capitoline Hill where the triumphal procession ended.

1002. **Tarpeian.** From here criminals were thrown.

1022. **Rienzi,** after leading a successful insurrection against the nobles, was proclaimed Tribune in 1347. Cf. Bulwer-Lytton's *Rienzi, The Last of the Tribunes*, and Wagner's opera.

1026. **Numa** was also a lawgiver to the Romans.

1027. **Egeria.** She was “the nymph who counselled Numa, the ancient lawgiver, who was fabled to have been her lover. Her fountain and grotto were placed beyond the Sebastian gate in Byron's day. They are now thought to be near the Metronian gate.” — Carpenter.

1031. **nympholepsy.** Mental disorder caused by nymphs.

1036. **thy fountain.** The so-called “Grotto of Egeria” is near the Appian Way, about a mile and a half from Rome. The “grotto” is “a nymphæum, originally covered with marble, the

shrine of the brook Almo (which now flows past it in an artificial channel) and erected at a somewhat late period. A niche in the posterior wall contains the mutilated statue of the river-god, standing on corbels, from which the water used to flow." — *Baedeker*.

**1047. bills.** The exigency of the rhyme, rather than high poetic art, dictates this choice. Do you find other similar cases in the poem?

**1070, 1071. The dull satiety, etc.** This is a characteristic attitude in Byron. Find other examples.

**1105. Reaping the whirlwind.** Cf. *Hosea viii:7*. "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."

**1112. doubly curst.** Why doubly?

**Stanza CXXV.** In the discussion here and in the succeeding stanzas Byron is doubtless thinking of his own infelicitous marriage with Miss Milbanke.

**Stanza CXXVI.** Seldom does Byron express a more hopeless mood than in this stanza. Compare it with the whole of *Manfred*.

**1129. upas . . . tree.** Study this metaphor carefully. Express the idea, divorced from the figure.

**1140. cabined, cribbed, confined.** Cf. *Macbeth*, III. iv. 24.

But now I'm cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears.

**1143. couch.** This is a technical term in surgery; to couch a cataract means to treat it by pushing down the opaque lens with a needle.

**1147. Coliseum.** The first, second, and third stories of the Flavian amphitheater were, Mr. E. H. Coleridge tells us, built upon arches. Between the arches, eighty to each story, stood three-quarter columns. Byron in *Manfred*, Act III. sc. iv. lines 8-13, has another description of the Coliseum by night.

**Stanza CXXX.** In this and the following stanzas Byron makes his appeal to Time to give to him retributive justice. He feels that he has been deeply wronged and unfairly condemned by the British public.

Does this impress you as being too personal; or do you like it all the more for its strong personal display of emotion?

**1171. this wreck.** The Coliseum.

**1182.** Look this up in a classical dictionary; or, better still, read *The Libation Pourers* and the *Eumenides* by Æschylus.

**1194. thou.** Nemesis. Byron here seems intent on asserting that for the faults for which he had been condemned he was not in reality to blame, and that in time he would be cleared of blame.

**1196.** The dash at the end of the line here indicates that the poet stops short of mentioning any name — his sister's, most likely.

**1200.** decline. What part of speech?

**Stanza CXXXV.** What do you think of this self-praise?

**1221.** Janus glance. Janus was the name applied to the Roman god who looked in both directions. Cf. our word *January*.

**1234.** The seal is set. My curse is ended.

dread power. "Sentiment of antiquity." — *Tozer*.

**1243.** buzz of eager nations. In the Coliseum crowd of 80,000 or more there would be many nationalities present.

**1247.** genial. Here used ironically.

**Stanza CXL.** Gladiator. The famous statue of The Dying Gladiator is now known to represent a dying Gaul. Byron's descriptive powers are seldom more effectively used than in this stanza. Study the description in an effort to analyze the elements which contribute to the vividness.

**1274.** millions' blame or praise, etc. "When one gladiator wounded another, he shouted, 'He has it,' 'Hoc habet,' or 'Habet.' The wounded combatant dropped his weapon, and, advancing to the edge of the arena, supplicated the spectators. If he had fought well, the people saved him, if otherwise, or as they happened to be inclined, they turned down their thumbs and he was slain." — *Hobhouse*.

**1279.** From its mass. The Coliseum was for a long time used as a stone quarry.

**1184.** developed, opens the decay, etc. When we examine it in detail we come to realize the detail.

**1293.** Like laurels, etc. "Suetonius informs us that Julius Cæsar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was the conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald." — *Byron*.

**1297.** While stands the Coliseum, etc. "This is quoted in the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* as a proof that the Coliseum was entire when seen by the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims at the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century." — *Byron*. It is ascribed to the Venerable Bede, and the original reads: "Quamdiu stabit Colisens, stabit et Roma ; quando cadet Colisens, cadet Roma ; quando cadet Roma, cadet et mundus."

**1306.** Here the poet commences his description of the Pantheon. The transition is not clear until we reach the last line.

**1321.** altars. The Pantheon was consecrated as a church by Pope Boniface IV. in 609.

**1323.** whose busts around them close. In modern times busts of some of the better known Italians have been placed here, along with those of Raphael, Hannibal, and others.

**Stanza CXLVIII.** "This and the three next stanzas allude to the story of a Roman daughter, which is recalled to the traveller by the site or pretended site of that adventure now shown at the church of San Nicola in Carcere." — *Byron*. The legend-

ary young woman had lately become a mother, and when admitted to the prison of her father, who was condemned to death by starvation, she nourished him with her milk. The story is found in Festus (*De Verb. Signif.* xx), and also in Pliny and Valerius Maximus.

**1351. The starry fable of the milky way** is the story in Greek mythology which tells of Hercules being carried as an infant to Olympus, where he was put to the breast of Hera, who lay asleep. When she awoke she pushed him away, and the spilled milk formed the Milky Way.

**1360. Mole.** This edifice, now called the castle of St. Angelo, was built as a mole or mausoleum for the ashes of Hadrian.

**1361. Egypt's piles.** The pyramids.

**1362. copyist of deformity, etc.** Byron here speaks disparagingly of Hadrian—he was a mimic, a copyist who built shapeless structures resembling those which he had seen in his travels.

**1369. dome.** This and the six following stanzas refer to the church of St. Peter's. Read the seven stanzas together, and then try to decide what it is in this description which most impresses you. Byron has here succeeded in communicating, in a highly vivid way, the sensations he experienced. How has he accomplished this?

**1370. The temple of Diana at Ephesus.**

**1375. The mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople.**

**1393. so defined.** Brought into clear outline.

**1396. but increasing, etc.** But you are increasing with the advance, as you do when you climb a great mountain.

**1402. which vies, etc.** It was of this dome that Michael Angelo said that his plan would raise the Pantheon in air.

**1431. can.** Have power to do.

**1433. Laocoön.** See classical dictionary.

**1441. lord of the unerring bow.** The statue of Apollo Belvedere.

**1450-1453.** On this passage E. H. Coleridge has the following note. “It is probable that lines 1-4 of this stanza contain an allusion to the fact related by M. Pinel, in his work, *Sur l'Insanité*, which Milman turned to account in his *Belvedere Apollo*, a Newdigate Prize Poem of 1812:—

Beauteous as vision seen in dreamy sleep  
By holy maid on Delphi's haunted steep,  
'Mid the dim twilight of the laurel grove,  
Too fair to worship, too divine to love.  
Yet on that form in wild delirious trance  
With more than rev'rence gazed the maid of France,  
Day after day the love-sick dreamer stood  
With him alone, nor thought it solitude!  
To cherish grief, her last, her dearest care,  
Her one fond hope—to perish of despair.

**1460. fire which we endure.** The higher nature which like-

wise gives us our capacity for pain. Prometheus, according to one myth, created men of clay and through fire endowed them with life.

**1461. whom.** The sculptor who carved the statue of Apollo Belvedere.

**1468. Pilgrim.** The reader is to bear in mind that Childe Harold, the central figure of the first and second Cantos, and to a less extent of the third, has not thus far figured in this Canto. He is last mentioned in Canto III. stanza 55. Byron is now little concerned with the idea of his own identification with the hero.

**1495. Hark! forth from the abyss, etc.** "From the thought of death the poet passes to the death of the Princess Charlotte, which happened when he was at Venice. No other event during the present century has caused so great a shock to public feeling in England; and Byron himself, as we learn from his letters, was deeply moved by it. She was the only daughter of George IV., who at the time was Prince Regent, and consequently she was Heiress Presumptive to the British crown. She was virtuous, accomplished, large-hearted, and sympathetic, and the hopes of the nation were fixed upon her as one who might inaugurate an era of prosperity. On May 16, 1816, she married Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (afterwards king of the Belgians), and on Nov. 6, 1817, she died in childbirth." — *Tozer*.

**1509. The mother of a moment.** The child lived but a moment, if indeed it were living when born.

**1513. Can it be?** Is it true that thou art dead?

**1516. And Freedom's heart.** Freedom, which has been carrying in her breast many sorrows, will put all these aside and will grieve alone for Princess Charlotte.

**1519. Beheld her Iris.** Saw in thee the promise of hope. An allusion to the bow of promise after the flood.

**1521. husband of a year.** Note above the date of her marriage and of her death.

**1523. Thy bridal's fruit is ashes.** Cf. Canto III. 34.

Like to apples on the Dead Sea's Shore,  
All ashes to the taste.

According to the legend the apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltites were filled with ashes.

**1537. tumbles mightiest sovereigns.** "Mary died on the scaffold; Elizabeth of a broken heart; Charles V., a hermit; Louis XIV., a bankrupt in means and glory; Cromwell, of anxiety; and, 'the greatest is behind,' Napoleon lives a prisoner. To these sovereigns a long but superfluous list might be added of names equally illustrious and unhappy." — *Byron*.

**1549. Nemi.** This lake has as its bed the crater of an extinct volcano of one of these Alban Hills which rise out of the Campagna of Rome.

**1555.** Calm as cherished hate. Do you consider this an effective simile?

**1561.** Latian coast, etc. On the coast of Latium the war celebrated by Virgil in his Epic (commencing "Of arms and men I sing") was begun.

**1562.** re-ascending star. *Aeneas*, the star of whose fortunes arose again after the fall of Troy, helped to found the Empire of Rome.

**1564.** Tully. Cicero had a retreat at Tusculum.

**1566.** Sabine farm. Here was Horace's resting-place.

**1574.** Calpe's rock. Gibraltar. "Last may be the last time that Byron and Childe Harold saw the Mediterranean together. Byron had seen it . . . on his return journey to England in 1811. Or by *last* he may mean the last time that it burst upon his view. He had not seen the Mediterranean on his way from Geneva to Venice in October–November, 1816, or from Venice to Rome April–May, 1817; but now from the Alban Mount the 'ocean' was in full view." — *E. H. Coleridge*.

**1576.** Symplegades. Two small islands near the entrance of the Black Sea.

**1578.** both. Byron the poet and Childe Harold the pilgrim.

**1586.** Does Byron wish for some human personality, such as his sister; or is he longing for something supernatural, such as the Witch of the Alps in *Manfred*? In his *Epistle to Augusta* he writes: —

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name  
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.

**Stanza CLXXVIII.** This is one of the stanzas in Byron's poetry which suggests his indebtedness to Wordsworth. While Byron's attitude toward nature is distinct from Wordsworth's, it has, nevertheless, evidently been influenced by such poems as Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*.

**Stanza CLXXIX.** The reader may interest himself by trying to decide what has made this one of the best known stanzas in Byron's poetry. Is it due to the style; to the happy selection of details; to the idea of immensity arcused; to the truth made immediately obvious when once asserted? Or are there other reasons?

**1620.** let him lay. Byron was temperamentally careless, and here as elsewhere is indifferent to grammatical law.

**1629.** Both the Spanish Armada and a large portion of the fleet captured by the British at Trafalgar were destroyed by tempests.

**Stanza CLXXXII.** Perhaps nowhere in all literature is the permanency and vital freshness of the ocean more effectively contrasted with the transitoriness and decay of men and nations.

**1632, 1633.** waters washed them power, etc. Thy waters

brought them commercial power while they were free, and to many a tyrant since thou hast likewise brought such power.

**Stanza CLXXXIII.** It is such stanzas as this which justify Matthew Arnold's critical stanza about Byron in *Memorial Verses*:

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
We bowed our heads, and held our breath.  
He taught us little, but our soul  
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.  
With shivering heart the strife we saw  
Of passion with eternal law;  
And yet with reverential awe  
We watched the fount of fiery life  
Which served for that Titanic strife.

### THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

SEVERAL commentators on *The Prisoner of Chillon*, Walter Scott amongst others, have seen the resemblance between the experiences of Byron's Bonnivard and Dante's Ugolino (*Inferno*, xxxii. 124 ff.). Shelley has said that Byron had deeply studied this death of Ugolino, and perhaps but for it would never have written *The Prisoner of Chillon*.

The following outline suggests the structure of the poem.

Stanza I. describes the effect of the long confinement upon the prisoner, and explains the family connection and the family loyalty to tenets they would not forsake. It concentrates attention upon the last three surviving brothers.

Stanza II. describes the appearance of the dungeon and emphasizes the torturing effect of the continuous wearing of prison chains. The faint gleam of light which strays into the prison adds rather to the gruesomeness of the scene.

Stanzas III., IV., and V. describe the situation of the three brothers and concentrate attention upon the different temperaments of each. The interest is largely character interest.

In Stanza VI. the interest is again centered in the prison. The effect of loneliness and isolation is rendered vivid by its remoteness from the manifestation of nature outside.

Stanzas VII. and VIII. narrate the deaths of the two brothers, and enlist the sympathy of the reader for the one surviving prisoner.

Stanza IX. records in telling phrase the effect of these terrible experiences; it has rendered him unconscious.

In Stanza X. the prisoner is aroused from his unconsciousness by the beautiful carol of a bird, which for a moment he fondly imagines to be the soul of his brother. When the bird finally flies away he knows it to be mortal — his brother's soul could not be cruel enough to leave him.

Stanza XI. records the growing compassion of the keepers, who grant him full liberty within his cell.

In Stanzas XII. and XIII. we note the prisoner's desire to get sight of nature. The sight of all this freedom and life outside makes him feel more poignantly the darkness of his abode.

Stanza XIV. records the perfectly passive spirit of the prisoner, who, grown used to solitude, despair, and vermin, regains his "freedom with a sigh."

**2, 3.** Do you see any reason why Byron should here employ the dimeter lines rather than a single tetrameter?

**3.** In a single night. "Ludovico Sforza and others. — The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis the Sixteenth, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect : to such, and not to fear, this change in *hers* was to be attributed." — *Byron*.

**10.** banned and barred. Distinguish the meaning between the two words.

**11.** But. Should an adversative be employed here? Would and be better?

**14.** tenets. What is the root meaning?

Can you tell from the phrasing whether Byron conceived Bonnivard to have been imprisoned because of his political or his religious views? What line is conclusive? The historical Bonnivard, it will be recalled, was accused of political crimes.

**27.** Gothic mould. Image these pillars, and distinguish between the Gothic and other forms of architecture.

**31.** A sunbeam which hath lost its way. This detail is particularly effective. Its mention helps to emphasize the darkness.

Of the effect of this sunlight Mr. Neaf in his *Guide to the Castle of Chillon* writes: "This is really so : the loopholes that are partly stopped up are now but long crevices or clefts, but Bonnivard, from the spot where he was chained, could, perhaps, never get an idea of the loveliness and variety of radiating light which the sunbeam shed at different hours of the day. In the morning this light is of luminous and transparent shining, which the curves of the vaults send back all along the hall. During the afternoon the hall assumes a much deeper and warmer colouring, and the blue transparency of the morning disappears; but at eventide, after the sun has set behind the Jura, the scene changes to the deep glow of fire."

**35.** Like a marsh's meteor lamp. Explain the effectiveness of the simile.

**41.** this new day. Explain.

**42.** painful. Why?

**52.** livid light. What image does this phrase suggest?

**57.** pure elements of earth. Such things in nature as sunshine and air.

**63.** dreary tone, etc. Follow closely the details of this description, and try to conceive the sound the poet has in mind.

72. **in his degree.** What was the *degree* of each brother? Name their characteristics.

80. Why this parenthesis? To the prisoner after his liberation, was the day as beautiful as it had been? Why?

82. Why does Byron choose a *polar* day for this comparison? What similar characteristics between the polar day and the youngest brother?

88. **With tears for naught but others' ills.** What characteristic is this? Try to think of several words that comprehend it.

92. Contrast the two brothers. Image them as distinct personalities.

102. **relics.** Consult the dictionary for the root meaning.

105. **dungeon was a gulf.** Explain the metaphor.

107. **Lake Leman.** Byron a few weeks later wrote the following sonnet to Lake Leman:—

Rousseau — Voltaire — our Gibbon — and De Staël —  
Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,  
Thy shores of names like these! wert thou no more,  
Thy memory thy remembrance would recall:  
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,  
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore  
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core  
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall  
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous; but by *thee*,  
How much more, Lake of Beauty, do we feel,  
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,  
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,  
Which of the heirs of immortality  
Is proud, and makes the death of glory real!

108. **thousand feet.** The lake is very deep; it has been sounded to the depth of 800 feet.

121. **wanton.** Heedless.

122. **the very rock hath rocked.** E. H. Coleridge calls this play on words "feeble and irritating." Do you agree? Can you find other instances in the poem? in Shakespeare? Cf. *Macbeth, passim.*

154. **foolish thought.** Why does Bonnivard consider it *foolish*?

160. In what case is *earth*?

166 **fair face.** Note the effect produced by the series of nouns with one accompanying adjective: *infant love; martyred father, dearest thought; latest care.*

185. **such.** Anything like violent emotion. In the following lines point out the words and phrases which suggest the quiet gradual decline.

189. **those.** "There is much delicacy in this plural. By such a fanciful multiplying of the survivors the elder brother prevents self-intrusion; himself and his loneliness are, as it were, kept out of sight and forgotten." — *Hales.*

210. Note here the contrast in the elder brother's emotion;

the spirit of dread quiet is violently disturbed. Is this effective?

**210 ff.** What details does the narrator here employ to bring out the idea of his own loneliness?

**227, 228.** Comment on the dimeter lines.

**229, 230.** I had no earthly hope, but I had spiritual faith, and thinking of my faith I could not commit suicide.

**Stanza IX.** In this stanza study the words and phrases which portray the unconsciousness of the prisoner. Each word — each pair of words, in some places — is full of concentrated thought and emotion.

**238. As shrubless crags within the mist.** Make a study of this simile. Is it effective? Why, or why not? Comment upon the epithet *shrubless*? Does it add to the effectiveness of the figure?

**Stanza X.** Do you consider the use of the bird particularly effective? Explain fully just what it did, and what emotions it aroused.

**255-258.** This is a very delicate way of expressing the idea that for a moment he forgot his sad environment.

**282.** Try to explain why the change to apostrophe is here effective. Remember that in poetry emotion must be aroused.

**284.** Does this seem natural or far-fetched?

**293, 294.** Study these figures and try to decide which is the more effective. Does the second remind you of anything from Wordsworth?

**316, 317.** These two lines well illustrate the emotional power of poetry. A sympathetic reading recreates in the reader the feeling which prompted the expression.

**327. had.** What form should we employ in ordinary prose?

**331.** With this line compare Wordsworth's line in *A Poet's Epitaph* : —

The harvest of a quiet eye.

Byron had satirized Wordsworth severely in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. He later regretted his stricture, and by such lines as these acknowledged a poetic debt.

**341.** "Between the entrance of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island (Ile de Paix); the only one I could perceive in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not over three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view." — *E. H. Coleridge*.

**356.** Explain the emotion of this line.

**Stanza XIII.** repays careful study. Note the selected details that lend vivid reality to the outside world upon which the prisoner's new gaze is briefly centered. The effect of it all is heightened by the contrast of the darkened prison gloom in which he is soon shrouded.

378. Cf. Lovelace's *To Althea in Prison* :—

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
 Nor iron bars a cage ;  
 Minds innocent and quiet take  
 That for a hermitage.

391. even. Explain. Where in prose would be the natural place of this word in the line ?

## MAZEPPA.

THIS poem, written in 1818, was published the following year. The first hundred and twenty-four lines give the setting of the story. Charles XII. of Sweden, accompanied by Mazeppa, a Cossack chieftain and ally, has, in his wounded condition, sought refuge in Turkish territory after the disastrous defeat at Pultowa. Here resting the King is glad to listen to Mazeppa's story.

1. **Pultowa's day.** The Battle of Pultowa on the Vórskla was fought between the Russians and the Swedes in July, 1709. The victorious Russians outnumbered the Swedes four to one.

9. **a day more dark and drear**, etc. This alludes to the Napoleon campaign of 1812.

16. **wounded Charles.** Several days before the Battle of Pultowa King Charles XII. of Sweden had been wounded. He nevertheless commanded that he be placed on a litter and carried with his troops. In the battle this litter was battered to pieces, another crude one was hurriedly improvised, and the King carried into Turkish territory.

53. **Mazeppa.** The Ukraine (the country of the Cossacks) has aspired to liberty; but being surrounded by Muscovy, the dominions of the Grand Seignior, and Poland, it has been obliged to choose a protector, and, consequently, a master, in one of these three States. The Ukrainians at first put themselves under the protection of the Poles, who treated them with great severity. They afterwards submitted to the Russians, who governed them with despotic sway. They had originally the privilege of electing a prince under the name of general; but they were soon deprived of that right, and their general was nominated by the court of Moscow.

The person who then filled that station was a Polish gentleman, named Mazeppa, and born in the palatiniate of Podolia. He had been brought up as a page to John Casimir, and had received some tincture of learning in his court. An intrigue which he had had in his youth with the lady of a Polish gentleman, having been discovered, the husband caused him to be bound stark naked upon a wild horse, and let him go in that condition. The horse, which had been brought out of Ukraine, returned to its own country, and carried Mazeppa along with it, half-dead with hunger and fatigue. Some of the country people gave him assistance;

and he lived among them for a long time, and signalized himself in several excursions against the Tartars. The superiority of his knowledge gained him great respect among the Cossacks; and his reputation daily increasing, the Czar found it necessary to make him prince of the Ukraine.

**58-97.** Study this portion of the poem in order to determine how the described actions of Mazeppa create the reader's conceptions of the old Hetman character. Enumerate the chief traits.

**104. Bucephalus.** This famous horse of Alexander the Great accompanied his master through various campaigns, and would allow no one but the king to ride him. The horse at his death was buried with great pomp.

**116. Borysthenes.** The Dneiper.

**128.** See note to line 53.

**157.** The wealth of this country still consists largely of salt mines.

**263.** What preceding line in the poem likewise suggests the character of the night on which the story is told? Do you consider such references as these effective — references which remind the reader of the scene in which the story is told? Or are we so interested in the story of Mazeppa's earlier experience that such details affect us as an intrusion? Point out other instances in the poem.

**308. sword.** Syntax?

**347.** What preceding line harmonizes especially with this?

**354. 'Sdeath.** An oath corrupted from *God's death*.

**392.** Note how the chronological sequence is here interrupted. The narrator jumping to a far-succeeding event connects it with his present narrative. Do you consider this effective? Justify your opinion.

**404. hot lead.** The roofs of old castles were often made principally of lead.

**437. Spahi.** Turkish cavalryman.

**460-464.** Here and elsewhere Byron's description is intense in its emphasis on the gory. Is it so intense as to be revolting? Or is it simply in harmony with the general savagery of the time? Does it harmonize with the character of the narrator? Point out other instances of this intense realism.

**538.** The thread on which the successive tropes or images are loosely strung seems to give if not to snap at this point. "Considering that Mazeppa was sprung of a race which in moments of excitement, when an enemy has stamped upon its vitals, springs up to repel the attack, it was only to be expected that he should sink beneath the blow — and sink he did." The conclusion is at variance with the premise. — *E. H. Coleridge*.

**597. How many hours, etc.** Compare

How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare.

— *Ancient Mariner*.

**600-604.** Study these lines for concentrated descriptive effect. A most vivid picture is portrayed in few words.

**664. werst.** This word, often written *verst*, is a unit of measure—about two-thirds of a mile. What is the syntax?

**744-746.** An entry in Byron's journal of Feb. 18, 1814, reads as follows: "Is there anything beyond? Who knows? He that can't tell. Who tells that there is? He who don't know. And when shall he know? Perhaps when he don't expect, and generally when he don't wish it. In this last respect, however, all are not alike: it depends a good deal upon education, something upon nerves and habits, but most on digestion."

**816. vulture.** Would *raven* be more effective? Cf. line 770.



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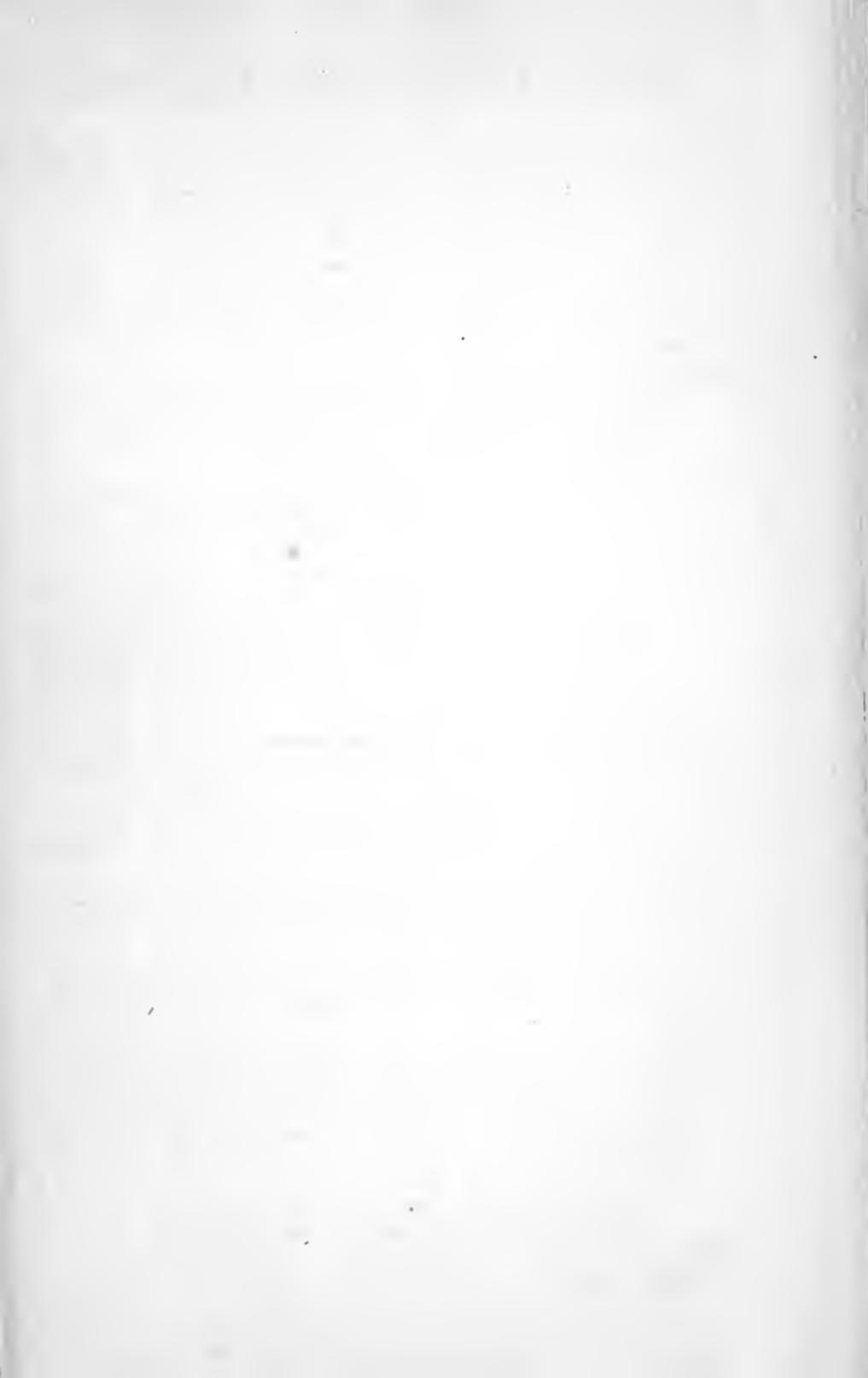
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